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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended for individuals who are experiencing transitions that call for changes in relationships, routines, roles, or assumptions within the settings of work, school, family, health, or finances. It is intended to assist them in becoming aware that (1) transitions and change are inevitable and natural, (2) there are many resources and options for managing these events; and (3) through renewed focused awareness of values, competencies, and interpersonal skills, they may gain the competencies for coping with and managing transitions in the future. An introduction discusses conditions of change, the role of education, a model for self-empowerment, and transition skills. The manual is divided into four units: perspectives on transitions, perspectives on coping, perspectives on managing transitions, and learning from transition decisions. Each unit is based on an objective. Activities to enable the individual to achieve this objective are then provided. They include readings, questions, inventories, check lists, and exercises. Appendixes contain 84 pages of additional materials of these types. A bibliography concludes the manual. (YLB)

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TRANSITION TRAINING: MANUAL FOR PERSONAL GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, AND SELF-EMPOWERMENT

Submitted by:
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TRANSITION TRAINING:

MANUAL

FOR

PERSONAL GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, AND SELF-EMPOWERMENT

Cheryl Presley and Joseph Karmos

Southern Illinois University

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Introduction

Change has always been central to American life. More than a century ago, de Tocqueville remarked that "the American has no time to tie himself to anything, he grows accustomed only to change and he ends by regarding it as a natural state of man" (Pierson, 1938). This social commentary about nineteenth century America seems remarkably apt as our nation approaches the 21st century. Contemporary theorists (Schlossberg, 1984, 1981; Moos & Tsu, 1979; Schneider, 1984; Levinson, 1978; Bridges, 1980; Gould, 1978) have noted that American adults are encountering an increasing number of changes during their lifespans which call for new patterns of behavior or for revisions in their perceptions of self and environment.

Even though our predecessors always accepted and adapted to change, they usually had relatively stable lifestyles. However, the United States is presently in the midst of one of the great economic transitions, a transition which illustrates both the dynamic nature of the American marketplace and the price paid for its benefits. This country creates about 600,000 new businesses annually - but approximately 40,000 go bankrupt (Diebold, 1984). This "creative destruction" assures that the forecasts for the future signal a certainty of a greater number of changes for individuals to manage. The only thing to be sure of in the information age is that the rate of change will accelerate. Technology itself creates the base from which this change will happen.

The major restructuring of the U.S. economy has serious implications for the individual worker. As a result of foreign competition, changing world markets, and consumer preferences, America's economic position in the world has eroded and many workers in major manufacturing industries including steel, automobiles, rubber, textiles, radio and television receivers, and electrial equipment have lost their jobs and have been forced to suddenly change their occupations and life styles (Pratzner & Ashley, 1984, p.5). Simultaneously, the advent of high technology insures continued and accelerated change in the nature of available jobs.

> The increased use of industrial robots, office automation, microelectronic devices, and computerized information and telecommunication systems, will not only affect where and how we live, and what we purchase, but also how we work. The impact of changing technology, especially the continued expansion of computer applications in the work place, will affect the skill requirements and work styles of millions of workers over the next ten to twenty years. New technology will in some cases reduce the skill requirements of some occupations, especially those involved with more routine and repetitive functions such as parts assembly, equipment operations, signal monitoring, and information handling functions. Other occupations involving the functions of planning, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, troubleshoot-

> ing, and maintaining complex systems will likely experience an increase in skill requirements (Pratzner & Ashley, 1984, pp. 5-6).

In order to survive this accelerating rate of change the individual worker will have to be more flexible, more versatile, and more adaptable in planning and actualizing their respective careers and lives (Pratzner, 1978; Naisbitt, 1982). They will have to learn how to learn throughout the rest of their lives. Ample support for this assertion is available.

> From Action for Excellence (1983): "We don't believe a high school graduate in 1985 will retire 35 years from now from the same job for which he was hired - during that period he will need to be retrained and retrained many times."
>
> A Nation at Risk (1983) stated that, "In our view, formal schooling in youth is the essential formulation for learning throughout one's life. But without life-long learning one's skills will become rapidly dated."
>
> The Paideia Proposal (1982) asserts that, "Learning never reaches a terminal point. As long as one remains alive and healthy, learning can go on and should."

Never before has the interface between technology, change, and the people who use technology, been more important if our society is to prosper. A balance must be struck between the impact of technology and change and the human beings who are affected by it.

> Human resources development is the least understood factor affecting productivity and performance and perhaps the most crucial. In an increasing complex work world, the quality of interaction between human beings will often be a factor that distinguishes a productive business undertaking from a failing one. (House Committee on Science & Technology, 1981).

America's social capacity, the capacity to cope, adapt, and excel in an increasingly technological society is dependent on human beings' ability to affect and control that technological development. The human factor is important because ultimately it is the employees who must apply the new techniques in the workplace. It is the worker who is intimately involved in shouldering much of the burden of the technological transitions, losing homes, being forced on welfare, being uprooted due to plant closings, and being retrained due to job obselescence.

Economic transitions reflected in the workplace are also apparent in social institutions. Traditional roles of men and women are rapidly being transformed as more women enter the workforce. Alternative family structures are becoming more prevalent as evidenced by a move toward role equity, extended families, or one parent households. When occupationally related transitions interact with changes in societal norms and expectations the life transitions become less and less predictable. Managing transitions will become increasingly important for individuals as they enter the world of work and a society in

which accelerated change is the most predictable variable in their future lives. To survive, individuals will have to learn new ways to adapt and cope with their environment.

The Role of Education

Educational systems will be called upon to play a central role in educating students who can adaptively respond to the changes that the future holds. Parents will expect schools to provide the skills and strategies that their children will need to survive and prosper with ever increasing social and technological change as they enter the world of work. In the monograph Adaptation to Work (Ashley, 1980), from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, it was noted that an inability of many workers in the American labor force was that of adapting to the changes, demands, and responsibilities of work. Business and industry will look to the schools to produce workers who possess and manage skills which contribute to achievement of employers' goals. Education has no alternative but to respond to this emerging imperative because society will surely hold public schools accountable for accomplishing this important task.

The educational system must help prepare students to cope with these realities by utilizing education as an instrument of change through which they may have the resources and options to build and survive the future. The challenge for educators seems overwhelming as powerful alternatives to public schooling threaten to change the

social context of education. The idea of sociotechnical literacy (Pratzner, 1984) no longer rests on the teaching of a fixed body of information in a fixed routine but instead on the incorporation of ways of transforming students' abilities to function in a changing world, to learn how to learn for a lifetime, to cope, manage, and adapt to the challenge of an uncertain future. Basic skills have typically been a reflection of Americans' work activities and values. That is, the identification of basic skills has been revised as technology and society changed. Presently changes are occuring so rapidly that predicting basic skills has become very difficult. Education must now respond to the clear, and urgent demands that society and the workplace will place upon the individual by providing opportunities for students to learn basic skills needed to adapt to these changes and thereby enhancing their personal growth, development, and self empowerment.

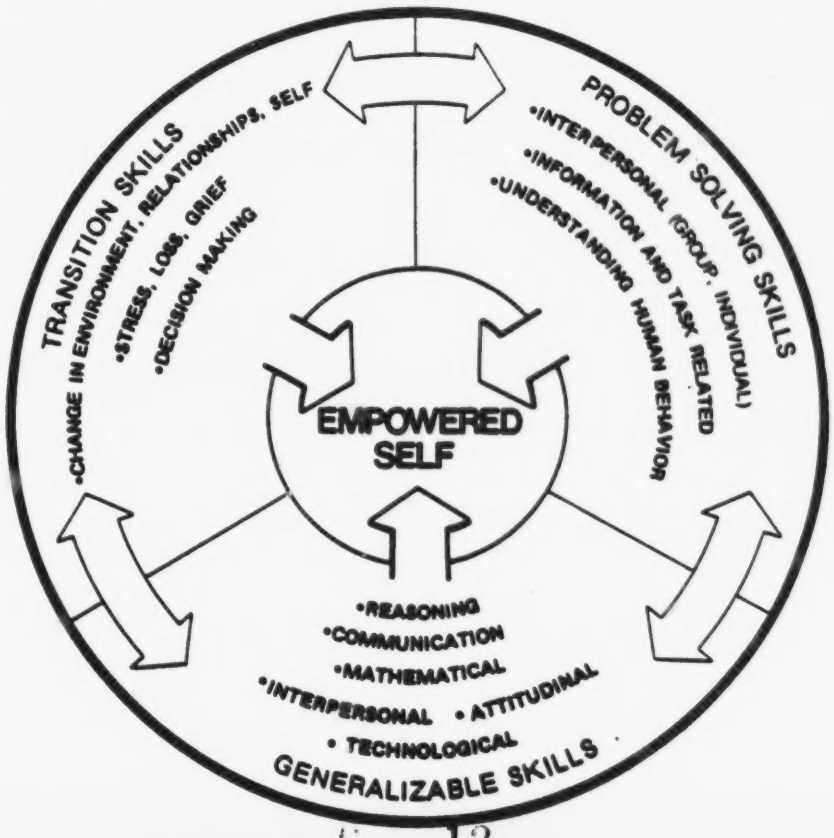
Daniels, Karmos, and Presley (1985) have introduced a comprehensive model which identifies three classes of skills and knowledge within which instructional strategies and curricula decisions may be developed. The three classes of skills are:

Generalizable Skills and knowledge (hereafter referred to as Generalizable Skills) actively used in work performance, which are transferable across jobs and occupations and which are instrumental to success on the job and in the classroom. Examples include mathematical, reasoning, communication (written and oral), interpersonal, technological, and attitudinal skills.

Transitional Skills and knowledge (hereafter referred to as Transitional Skills) are used to manage life transitions, especially occupationally related ones. They include managing changes in the environment, in relationships, and in oneself; managing stress, loss, and grief; and making decisions.

Problem Solving Skills and knowledge (hereafter referred to as Problem Solving Skills) are employed in the resolution of problematic situations including interpersonal problems (group and individual), information and task-related problems, and problems related to people's behavior in cooperative groups.

SKILLS FOR ADAPTING WITH CHANGE



These classes of skills are seen as dynamic and overlapping. However, for the purposes of this manual the class of Transition Skills will be emphasized in an attempt to fulfill a perceived need of employers, educators, counselors, and students to gain resources for increasing their options to build and survive the future.

Transition Skills

The class of transition skills refers to those skills which are used to manage life transitions, especially occupationally related ones. Subsumed within this class of skills are those which include managing changes in environment, relationships and the self; managing stress, loss, and grief; and making decisions. These skills are introduced within a framework which focuses on aquisition of a series of skills within four steps. The four steps identified in the framework are:

Step 1: Identify the Transition

Step 2: Identify Coping Resources

Step 3: Identify and Choose Ways of Managing the Transition

Step 4: Trial, Integration, and Self-Transformation

The framework is an attempt to introduce a comprehensive approach to handling transitions which may be incorporated into public school curricula and a) utilizes an understanding of development, b) organizes knowledge and processes necessary for maximizing an individual's ability to adapt and manage transitions across settings (personal, interpersonal, workplace, institutional, or community) and c) focuses on the self-empowerment of the individual to understand and deal with events as they occur.

Manual's Goal

This manual is designed to assist individuals who are experiencing transitions which call for changes in relationships, routines, roles, or assumptions within the settings of work, school, family, health, or finances (Schlossberg, 1980). It is to assist individuals to a) become aware that transitions and change are inevitable and natural and that there are many resources and options for managing these events, and b) that through renewed focused awareness of values, competencies, and interpersonal skills, they may gain the competencies for coping with and managing transitions in the future. The activities in this manual are designed to provide individuals with concepts and skills to manage transitions in interpersonal, school, and work settings. The activities are experiencial and are based on the assumption that as individuals learn to manipulate and understand certain aspects of their environment they will regain or maintain control and thereby experience self-empowerment.

The approach in this maual is highly interactive and may be utilized as a self-controlled intervention strategy for dealing with change.

MANUAL'S OBJECTIVES

On completion of this manual, the individual will be able to:

1) Identify a transition and assess its impact on aspects of life.

2) Mobilize skills for assessing, developing, and utilizing coping resources: support systems, coping responses, personal characteristics, and communication skills.

3) Identify and choos ways of managing the transition including using problem solving strategies and time for personal reflection.

4) Implement chosen strategy, and evaluate, revise, and transfer skills to various transition settings.

Several assumptions about the activities in this manual are:

1) Changes and transitions are inevitable occurances in an individual's life-span. These transitions may be unpredictable, predictable, or a chronic hassle, but they can be managed. It is possible to learn to cope with these changes.

2) Awareness of self, values, and options allow individuals to proactively manage change and transition.

3) Attainment of skills necessary for proactive management of transitions increases an individual's sense of self empowerment.

4) Successful management of a transition increases the likelihood of successful management of future transitions as well as reduces the amount and severity of unproductive responses.

UNIT I

PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSITIONS

Objective I: Identify and assess the impact of a transition.

- Understand the nature of a transition.
- Identify a transition accurately.
- Assess the impact of a transition.

Activity 1: Reading: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF A TRANSITION

As Alvin Toffler (1970) wrote in Future Shock, "Change is avalanching upon our heads and most people are grotesquely unprepared to cope with it." At a time when the only certainty is that change will occur, it often seems an overwhelming task to make sense of it. It is not just the pace of change that is disorienting, but even the experience of being in a transition is changing. Individuals are losing faith that going through transitions will get them anywhere. Marriages and jobs are particularly confusing and painful since the nature of these institutions is profoundly changing. Bridges (1980) described transitions as launching out from a riverside dock to cross to a landing on the opposite side - only to discover in midstream that the landing was no longer there.

The process of understanding what is happening, letting go, experiencing the confusing nature of the in-betweeness, mobilizing resources and skills, and launching forth again is the focus of this manual. This unit will aid individuals in gaining perspective and clarity about the transition process and in particular, about a transition they might be experiencing.

Lifespan Data on Transitions

Transitions develop over the course of a life time. Life begins as a transition from dependency to independency and gradually increases to changes in values, self-image, and attitudes. The process is not likely to end at twenty, thirty, or forty. Individuals will experience transitions throughout their lifespans. Various theorists have attempted to

explain these lifspan transitions by focusing on aspects of the transitions which possess a common theme for the individuals going through similar life stages.

Some theorists propose it is the stages that individuals pass through which bring transitions into their lives. Other theorists believe it is age related tasks, and still others believe it is the stress of events which occur which may or may not be age related that require the individual to face changes. Whichever perspective one turns to for understanding, it is clear that changes and transitions are a predictable part of one's life.

Erik Erikson (1968) explained how identity formation occurs during youth. An individual tries on a series of roles and relationships - daughter, athlete, student, friend, sister, dreamer - out of this comes a sense of self. Sometimes, however, there is not a clear or coherent sense of self. Things have not yet come together. Consequently, many individuals upon entering a new transition bring some old identity issues with them.

Some theorists (Levinson, 1976; Neugarten, 1976) suggest that various life stages and sex roles affect people's responses to transitions. That is, over their life spans, men and women perceived different sources to be related to the stress of change. For women the most prominent areas of stress were education, family, health, dating, marriage, and work. For men, they were education, work, residential changes, marriage, military, and family.

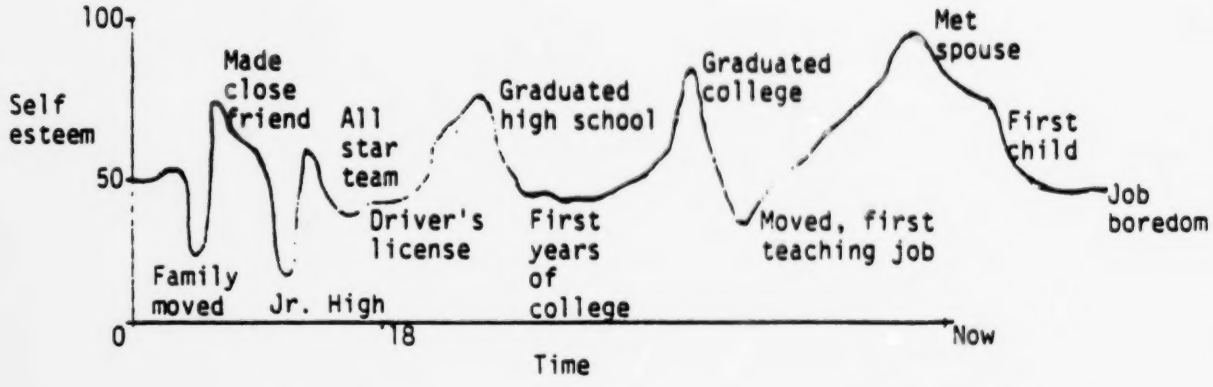
Lowenthal (1976) studied how the perceptions of stress differed among age groups with younger groups experiencing the greater degree of stress, particularly young males. Middle age also contained periods of high stress related to changing jobs, getting fired, retraining, or experiencing promotion. Retirement brought new stressors as illness, disability, dealing with death and loss of friends, spouse, or parents. Each of these life stages brought with it a fairly predictable set of transitions. The sense of control over life's events is the most important determinant in holding a positive outlook toward transitions and planning for the future (Brammer & Abrego, 1981).

What is important here is that people recognize when they are in transition and are armed with skills to deal with it. It is the transition process rather than a youth crisis, a mid-life crisis, or a retirement crisis that must be understood. The value of this understanding is that it offers a foundation from which to manage a wide range of transition types.

Whatever a transition gives and takes away from our lives it inevitably leads us from one place to another. A transition that once made you feel your life was over may now reveal that it worked out for the best. At other times you made choices in your own interest that later turned out to be detrimental. What has your experience been?

Take a few minutes to reflect back on your childhood and follow your life to the present. You will be asked now to graph these events on page 16 after reading the following instructions.

1) To be able to graph the changes in self-esteem you've experienced, please close your eyes. Take a few minutes to reflect upon an experience or a time in your life when you felt very good about yourself. Use the experience as the "100 mark" or upper limit to your self-esteem axis. Now, think back to the time when you really felt rotten about yourself. Let this feeling be a score of "0" on your self-esteem axis. Next, think about an experience or a time when you felt somewhere in the middle between those two feelings as a midpoint of "50" to measure your self-esteem. A sample graph is illustrated. Do your graph on the next page.



2) Next label the peaks and troughs so that you can recall the event connected with them.

100
50
0

Activity 2: IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSITION

Reflective Questions:

As you reflect on the transitions you've experienced, consider the following questions.

1. In some of the transitions that you graphed, nothing very important seemed to change. But in others, many changes occurred. Make a list of the most significant transitions.

2. Beginning with the early transitions what can you say about "developmental issues"? For example: At 18 years old; entered military, first time away from home, testing independence.

3. For each transition you noted on your graph identify as precisely as you can what ended. For example: entering the military - end of security, loss of friends, loss of support system, etc.

Discussion

Hopefully this exercise helped you become more aware that in your life span you have already had many transitions; some predictable, some not. Some plunged you into the depths of despair and low self-esteem, others made you feel on top of the world. What is important to recognize at this point is:

a) Transitions, problematic or not, are normal aspects of life and that you have coped with many of the situations successfully.

b) You have a variety of coping skills and personal strengths which you have utilized in order to manage these transitions.

It will be a function of future units in this manual to present you with additional awareness and skills to manage future transitions in a satisfying manner.

Activity 3: Impact of Events Scale: TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF A TRANSITION

It is important for you now to focus as clearly as you can about your present life situation. What event has occurred in your life in the past year which has brought change? Below are some guidelines to help you focus:

Losses of relationships. What relationships have gone out of your life in the past year? Include marital separations, children leaving home, loss of a former friend, death of a friend or spouse, loss of co-workers.

Changes in home life. Did you have a child, did you get married, become ill, take care of a chronically ill person, move to a new home, retire?

Personal changes. Did you get sick, experience great success or failure, change eating habits, sleeping patterns, start or stop school, change your appearance drastically?

Work and financial changes. Did you get fired, change jobs, get promoted/demoted, increase/decrease your income, take out new loans or mortgages?

Inner changes. Did you experience a spiritual awakening or a spiritual loss, psychological insights, change in self-image or values, have to abandon a dream?

As you reflect on the transition you've experienced in the last year, choose one which has been the most significant. When you identify the transition you wish to focus on, continue by filling out the questionnaire, Impact of Event Scale, on the next page.

IMPACT OF EVENT SCALE

Instructions:

Please fill in the INFORMATION section. Below that is a list of comments made by people after stressful life events. Please fill in the box for each item, indicating how frequently these comments were true to you DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS. If they did not occur during that time, please fill in the NOT AT ALL box. Please answer EACH item by filling in ONE of the boxes.

INFORMATION

About _____ ago, I experienced _____.
weeks (write in life event)

	NOT AT ALL	RARELY	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN
1. I thought about it when I didn't mean to.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I had trouble doing other things because the event kept coming up into my mind.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I tried to remove it from memory	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep because of pictures or thoughts about it that came into my mind.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I had waves of strong feelings about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I had dreams about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I stayed away from reminders of it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I felt as if it hadn't happened or it wasn't real.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I tried not to talk about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	NOT AT ALL	RARELY	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN
11. Pictures about it popped into my mind	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Other things kept making me think about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn't deal with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. I tried not to think about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Any reminder brought back feelings about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. My feelings about it were kind of numb.	☐	☐	☐	☐

To Score: 3 points for each OFTEN
2 points for each SOMETIMES
1 point for each RARELY
0 points for each NOT AT ALL

Add all your points together

A score of 33 - 48 indicates the event is <u>greatly</u> impacting your life.

A score of 17 - 32 indicates the event has a more than average impact on your life.

A score of 1 - 16 indicates the event is having a moderate impact on your life.

(Center for Study of Neuroses, U. of California, San Francisco)

Discussion

Failure to recognize that a particular transition has stress potential can increase the amount of stress with which an individual must cope. Holmes and Rahe (1967) as well as other researchers have noted the relationship between numerous types of transitions and illness, particularly those which are stress related. Therefore, recognition of these transitions play a crucial role in health. Some individuals also find that the process of identifying the source of stress and the impact of the event reduces anxiety because it provides a focus for unrest and discomfort. When the potency of particular events is recognized it is then possible to see realistic options and learn effective ways to cope.

As you ponder how much stress your transition has caused, it may be helpful to answer the following questions.

Reflective Questions

1. From which source did the transition begin (i.e. other people, job, school, living situation)?

2. Was this transition expected, unexpected, or part of an ongoing hassle?

3. How did the transition change the following: self-image, family routines, social routines, work routines, health, economic well being?

UNIT II

PERSPECTIVES ON COPING

Objective II: Identifying and Using Coping Resources.

- Identify coping responses.
- Identify external and internal support systems.
- Identify and choose personal strengths wich will assist in handling transitions.
- Identify personal values that contribute to transition decisions.

Activity 1: Reading: IDENTIFYING AND USING COPING RESOURCES

Coping with transitions so that survival and a return to balance are assured is a basic necessity of individuals throughout their life-spans. The process of coping with transitions has the potential for both growth and retreat; movement and stagnation; affirmation and resignation. The assumption of this manual is that an individual can learn to manage future transitions in a manner whereby a renewal process of actualizing new life goals and directions may lead to greater satisfaction than before the transition took place. This potential for growth and development and positive learning from distressful changes is the difference between mere adjustment to change and adaptation in an actualizing sense. The consequences of not managing transitions may manifest themselves in the following ways:

- It is less likely that subsequent transitions will be resolved.
- Failure to resolve issues around the transition keeps energy bound to the past - and to loss experienced as a result of the transition (Schneider, 1984).

The term "coping" refers to problem-solving efforts made by an individual when the demands faced are highly relevant to one's welfare and when these demands tax all or most adaptive resources (Lazarus, 1974). This definition suggests that coping with threat or promise is an emotional

as well as a cognitive experience. An individual's response to a transition will be based on an evaluation of available coping resources and the interaction with internal or environmental demands. There are a number of factors which influence both the response style to transitions and the impact upon the individual. Some of these factors include background and personality factors, interpersonal supports, and individual coping responses.

Background and personality factors

Transitions are not always discrete events but often are part of one's growing and changing. These developmental transitions share certain characteristics. 1) They are the result of development, growth, and aging. 2) They may not have an external event associated with them. 3) They involve in some way the challenging of previously held, developmentally appropriate assumptions and beliefs (Schneider, 1984, p.51). On the other hand, transitions which originate from sources other than developmental issues: job loss, demotion, death of family, friends, divorce, also have certain characteristics in common. 1) While they may occur during a critical developmental stage, the impetus for the transition occurs outside of the individual. 2) The external events associated with them are most often visible. 3) The impact is more associated with feelings of being out of control.

A wide range of personality factors shape the range of coping responses an individual thinks are available in a given situation. Factors such as age, health, intelligence, philisophical orientation,

spiritual understandings, and cultural background have been identified by researchers (Schlossberg, 1981; Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Schneider, 1984; Lazarus, 1976) as affecting the individual's appraisal of the transition.

Cultural norms influence the meaning of a transition because of the meaning attached to it by the culture itself. In the United States retirement may be looked down upon as the end of one's life, but in the eastern cultures where extended families are more the norm older people assume the position of honor and respect.

People are most vulnerable to the negative effects of loss during childhood and adolescence because their adaptive and conceptual skills are not yet fully developed. However, as society has grown less responsive to the aged, they too find that they have little access to chances of feeling useful and in control. If an individual perceives that they have an inability to control events, depression and perceived inability to cope with problematic situations arise.

In conditions of high ego involvement, hyperanxious individuals easily become behaviorally and cognitively disturbed and therefore mobilize more unrealistic and inappropriate defense strategies. Lazarus and Launier (1978) noted that personality may also affect stress reactions by determining choices throughout a life time. For example, persons with low ego involvement, low confidence, will seek out relatively secure and undemanding ways of dealing with change, not take risks, and not use these changes as opportunities to grow.

Coping Responses

Pearlin and Schooler (1978) have suggested that coping responses are those behaviors which an individual does on their own behalf when confronted with change. These reponses are used by individuals in a highly adaptive way. A highly adaptive individual will choose responses which are most likely to be effective in any given situation. These coping responses fall into three major categories:

1. Responses that modify the situation or alter the source of strain (negotiating in marriage, using disciplinary tactics in parenting, seeking advice, etc.).
2. Responses that mindfully control the personal meaning of the problem. These responses neutralize the threat associated with the stress (using phrases such as "things aren't really so bad," devaluing importance of object - these tactics generally may be classified as avoidance).
3. Responses that minimize personal discomfort - or manage the stress (denial, passive acceptance, anger, hopeless resignation, drugs, alcohol, averting attention).

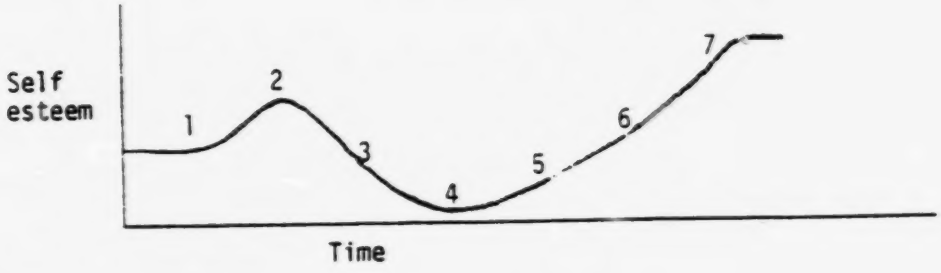
One crucial coping response is mobilizing and using a support system. The importance of a support system may be the key to handling the stress of a transition. Individuals may receive support from family, friends, church, or social service agencies. The awareness of existing and available support affects an individual's perception of stress and capacity to cope with threats present in a transition. Unfortunately, in times of stress individuals may not fully explore an appropriate range of support. Internal support must not be neglected. According to Brammer and Abrego (1981) internal supports are those messages to ourselves about our own experiencing of a transition. Skills presented in this unit will be useful in utilizing internal and external supports at any point in a transition and they also can be utilized for stress management.

Support systems, coping skills, and personality variables all influence our response to transitions. Dealing with a transition involves a web of variables. An individual seldom moves in a straight line from one phase of the transition to the next. At any point one individual may feel depressed while another stays balanced. One individual may see life as tragic and full of suffering, while another may view it as full of joy, love, sadness, and pain. Brammer & Abrego (1981) introduce Hopson and Adams' (1977) theory which suggests that responses to transitions follow a predictable pattern. These responses are representative of an individaul's over all feelings about a transition.

The components are described briefly as:

1) Immobilization - period of shock, intensity varies with characteristics of the stressor.
2) Minimization - a period of denial of some parts of reality giving time for retreat and internal regrouping.
3) Depression/anger - full realization of the change and mood swings.
4) Letting go - dealing with the full reality of experience and moving into something new which is unknown.
5) Testing - period of trying new options on a preliminary basis.
6) Search for meaning - cognitive process of finding new meaning from experience.
7) Integration - integrating experience, meaning, new behaviors into one lifestyle.

This cycle of personal reactions and feelings may be graphed as follows:



Reflective Question

Regarding the transition you identified in Unit I, where are you at on the graph?

Positive Aspects of Transitions

What the Hopson and Adams model suggests is that any transition can have a positive outcome; even from those experiences one would not choose to occur. One of the primary tasks of managing a transition is to integrate 1) our awareness of the transition, 2) our coping attempts to manage the transition, and 3) the necessity to resolve, reformulate, or transform the losses involved in the transition process.

The losses experienced in a transition may be from jobs, relationships, or material possessions, but what is striking about these losses is what these transitions do to our roles in life, our feelings about ourselves, and our identity. Our experience of loss is often so debilitating that we cannot see the possibilities for gain. The understanding of the transition process that Hopkins' model provides coupled with awareness of our own strengths and coping strategies maximizes our ability to manage a transition by achieving a balance which can preserve our sense of identity and increase our self esteem.

The remainder of this unit will introduce you to exercises which will enhance your skills for coping with transitions. Each objective has as its outcome awareness and mastery of the skills necessary to a) obtain and maintain an internal or external support system, b) identify and utilize appropriate coping strategies and c) gain awareness of personal strengths and styles which you use to manage life changes.

Activity 2: Coping Inventory: IDENTIFY COPING RESPONSES

The function of identifying your personal coping responses is to help you become aware of how you gain control over the situational aspects, the meaning, and the stress of your transition. Coping responses are generally referred to as "things people do to avoid being harmed by life strains" (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978, p.1).

Please follow the directions on the coping inventory which follows. When you are finished please go to Activity 3.

COPING INVENTORY

About _____ ago, you experienced _____
(weeks) (write in life event)

INSTRUCTIONS

Below is a list of ways that other people sometimes use to cope with stressful life events. Please read each item on the list and decide whether it applies to you. If it does not, fill in the box under DOES NOT APPLY column. If the statement does sound at least a little like something you did, then fill in the box in the DOES APPLY column. If it does apply and was VERY HELPFUL, fill in the box in that column. Please answer EACH item by filling in ONE of the boxes.

	DOES NOT APPLY	DOES APPLY	DOES APPLY AND WAS VERY HELPFUL
1. I tried to concentrate on other things in my life.	☐	☐	☐
2. I tried to think through the meanings of the event for my life at present.	☐	☐	☐
3. I tried to work out how the event related to things in my past.	☐	☐	☐
4. I worked to revise my expectations of the future.	☐	☐	☐
5. I tried to find a humorous or even tragi-comic element in the event or life in general.	☐	☐	☐
6. I tried to separate the rational from the irrational in my responses.	☐	☐	☐
7. I tried to separate the possible from the unlikely consequences that occured to me.	☐	☐	☐
8. I sought increased emotional support from others.	☐	☐	☐
9. I tried to find new interests.	☐	☐	☐
10. I tried to experience all my feelings and work them through.	☐	☐	☐

	DOES NOT APPLY	DOES APPLY	DOES APPLY AND WAS VERY HELPFUL
11. I tried to dose myself, to experience feelings sometimes, but put them out of my mind at other times.	☐	☐	☐
12. I tried to put the event out of my mind and just go on with my life.	☐	☐	☐
13. I sought consolation in philosophy or religion.	☐	☐	☐
14. I spent more time in nature, listening to music, with art or writing.	☐	☐	☐
15. I tried to devote myself to my work.	☐	☐	☐
16. I tried to talk about the event with others.	☐	☐	☐
17. I tried to find people who had experienced the same kind of event to see how they dealt with it.	☐	☐	☐
18. I tried to find out why the event evoked the feelings it did.	☐	☐	☐
19. I tried not to be bothered by conflicting feelings in my reactions to the event.	☐	☐	☐
20. I tried to develop an attitude toward the event which would help me to deal with it.	☐	☐	☐
21. I tried to clarify the choices I have in adjusting my present life to the effects of the event.	☐	☐	☐
22. I tried not to withdraw from other people.	☐	☐	☐
23. I welcomed some time alone to think about what had happened.	☐	☐	☐
24. I tried to figure out what would happen in the future if I behaved one way, and what would happen if I behaved another way.	☐	☐	☐
25. I tried not to make any decisions about the future until I was sure I was seeing things more clearly.	☐	☐	☐

	DOES NOT APPLY	DOES APPLY	DOES APPLY AND WAS VERY HELPFUL
26. I tried to look at my present situation as realistically as possible.	☐	☐	☐
27. I thought about events in my past life which might help me to deal better with the present.	☐	☐	☐
28. I tried to find some other outlets, like sports, cooking, or gardening, to relieve some of the feelings I had.	☐	☐	☐
29. I tried doing things impulsively, that I might have thought about before, if they made me feel better and didn't bother anyone else.	☐	☐	☐
30. I tried to think about the good things that had happened in my life and weigh what had appened against them, for a better perspective.	☐	☐	☐
31. I tried to be more useful to others.	☐	☐	☐
32. I looked for a person who could provide direction for me.	☐	☐	☐
33. I tried to remind myself that what has happened could have been worse.	☐	☐	☐

(Center for the Study of Neuroses, U. of California, San Francisco)

Activity 3: IDENTIFYING AND USING COPING RESPONSES

You have already identified ways in which you typically respond to transition and change. This activity is to:

1. further expand your choice of possible coping options,
2. more clearly identify your personal coping style, and
3. help you discriminate between your positive and negative coping responses.

Most individuals cope successfully with many stressors. Every day you manage a number of situations quite well. Usually, no single strategy will be effective in managing all of life's transitions. That is why you need a variety of coping styles and responses. You probably use three or four favorite coping styles over and over again. These you typically rely on to get you through most tough situations.

1. Look back at your coping inventory and identify the four or five coping responses that you use the most. List them here.

Negative and Positive Coping Responses

Every one of your coping mechanisms works or you wouldn't use it again. However, some copers have a high price. These are called NEGATIVE COPERS. Smoking, drinking, overeating do bring temporary relief from tension but the positive effects don't last as long as the negative. Most negative copers are effective short-term stress relievers, but they create additional problems if repeated over a long period of time.

POSITIVE COPERS are reliable stress relievers without the negative side effects. These strategies can be used over and over again for a variety of stressful situations. Positive copers can be assigned to six categories. Following is a list of some of the most often used NEGATIVE COPERS and POSITIVE COPERS.

NEGATIVE COPERS**

Alcohol:	Drink to change your mood. Use alcohol as your friend.
Denial:	Pretend nothing's wrong. Lie. Ignore the problem.
Drugs:	Abuse coffee/aspirin/medications. Smoke pot. Pop pills.
Eating:	Keep binging. Go on a diet. Use food to console you.

**From the PILEUP card game, 1982 Aid Association for Lutherans.

Fault-finding:	Have a judgmental attitude. Complain. Criticize.
Illness:	Develop headaches/nervous stomach/major illness. Become accident prone.
Indulging:	Stay up late. Sleep in. Buy on impulse. Waste time.
Passivity:	Hope it gets better. Procrastinate. Wait for a lucky break.
Revenge:	Get even. Be sarcastic. Talk mean.
Stubbornness:	Be rigid. Demand your way. Refuse to be wrong.
Tantrums:	Yell. Mope. Pout. Swear. Drive recklessly.
Tobacco:	Smoke to relieve tension. Smoke to be "in".
Withdrawal:	Avoid the situation. Skip school or work. Keep your feelings to yourself.
Worrying:	Fret over things. Imagine the worst.

POSITIVE COPERS**

MENTAL

Imagination:	Look for the humor. Anticipate the future.
Life Planning:	Set clear goals. Plan for the future.
Organizing:	Take charge. Make order. Don't let things pile up.
Problem solving:	Solve it yourself. Seek outside help. Tackle problems head-on.

**From the PILEUP card game, © 1982 Aid Association for Lutherans.

Relabeling:	Change perspectives. Look for good in a bad situation.
Time management:	Focus on top priorities. Work smarter, not harder.

PHYSICAL

Biofeedback:	Listen to your body. Know your physical limitations.
Exercise:	Pursue physical fitness. Jog. Swim. Dance. Walk.
Nourishment:	Eat for health. Limit the use of alcohol.
Relaxation:	Tense and relax each muscle. Take a warm bath. Breathe deeply.
Self-care:	Energize your work and play. Strive for self-improvement.
Stretching:	Take short stretch breaks throughout your day.

SPIRITUAL

Commitment:	Take up a worthy cause. Say "yes". Invest yourself meaningfully.
Faith:	Find purpose and meaning. Trust God.
Prayer:	Confess. Ask forgiveness. Pray for others. Give thanks.
Surrender:	Let go of problems. Learn to live with the situation.

Valuing: Set priorities. Be consistent. Spend time and energy wisely.

Worship: Share beliefs with others. Put faith into action.

2. As you look over both of these lists (positive and negative copers), place a check in front of the strategies you typically use.

3. Below list five of the NEGATIVE COPERS you use from most often to least often. Afterwards identify what using the coper does for you.

	List Coper Here	What does this coper do for you?
Example:	Get drunk	Make me forget my problem.
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	4.	4.
	5.	5.

4. What is the "cost" to you when you use each of the NEGATIVE COPERS?

Now review the list of POSITIVE COPERS. In each category place a check next to the copers you most frequently use.

5. List your most frequently used coping responses.

   1.

   2.

   3.

   4.

   5.

6. Are the copers you most commonly use found mostly in one category? If so, which one (spiritual, physical, mental, interpersonal, etc.)?

7. On the list of POSITIVE COPERS look at the ones which have no check in front of them. Which one or two copers in each category that you don't use now might be an effective addition to your repertoire of coping skills? List them here.

8. How might you practice these new copers? That is, where can you go to learn how to use them?*

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*Adapted from Stuctured Exercises in Stress Management Volume II Nancy Loving Tubesing and Donald A. Tubesing, Editors. Whole Person Press, PO Box 2151 Duluth, MN 55803

Activity 4: EXTERNAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

During times of transition individuals frequently need extra sources of support. Unfortunately, two things generally occur: 1) people become unable to identify more than a familiar few support systems and 2) people do not discriminate between individuals who truly can be of help and those who can be draining or misleading. Please make choices to spend time with individuals who can give you support both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Depending upon the transition you are going through support networks you might choose are:

a. friends who have been helpful during other troubled times
b. a spouse or parent who makes you feel valued regardless of what is happening in your life
c. a person who is a source of spiritual strength
d. an individual who will exercise or run with you
e. an individual who has financial awareness and can help you get in contact with monetary resources
f. a group of individuals who are experiencing a similar transition
g. an individual who can give you important information (for example, job care, Aid to Dependent Children, etc.)

Typically, because people utilize a limited number of those individuals who comprise a support system people gravitate only towards those who make them feel good and not to those who will "challenge" them and help them grow.

Identification of External Support Systems*

a) Begin this exercise by refocusing on the transition you identified earlier. On the form for this activity list all the individuals you have been in contact with since the beginning of this transition: parents, sisters/brothers, friends, counselors, fellow workers, etc.

b) In the second column write a short phrase describing the type of support each individual provides you.

c) Rate the impact made on you by the people you listed. The scale is

Very Negative	Slightly Negative	Neutral	Slightly Positive	Positive
-2	-1	0	+1	+2

d) Estimate the amount of time you spend on the average with each individual on the list.

e) You can get an idea of overall impact which these individuals have on you by multiplying Time x Impact. Enter it into T x I column.

f) If you would like to change the overall impact of any of these individuals on you, make a decision as to whether you should spend more or less time with them.

External Support Form

	Name	Form of Support	Impact	Time	TxI	More Time	Less Time
Example:	John	listener	+2	20	+40	X	

Reflective Questions

1. List the individuals who you would like to spend more time with. Less time with.

MORE TIME	LESS TIME

2. Make a list of individuals that are not on your list who may be of support to you during this transition. For example, a stress management group, a financial planner, etc.

3. Add the names from question 2 to your list on the External Support Form.

4. Below make a new list of all the individuals who may be of support to you for this transition. What do you need from each of them? How much time would you like to spend with them?

Support Person	What Do I Need?	Time

Discussion

Your support system may be the key to handling the stress of a transition. Although you may need and receive support from your family unit or intimate relationships, there is a network of others: institutions, communities, support groups of individuals experiencing the same transition, who may be beneficial to you. It is important during times of transition to create a personal network that will work for you in this transition. Remember that you should include individuals who a) have respect and or liking for you, b) can agree with you or challange you in a growthful way and c) can give you assistance such as information, time, caring, money, etc.

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*This activity is adapted from Abrego, P. & Brammer, L. (1979). Developing coping skills for career related changes. Education Resource Information Center.

Activity 5: IDENTIFY INTERNAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

How you think about an event affects how you feel and how you behave. Internal dialogues, the flow of thoughts and memories, fill waking moments. During times of transition this "self-talk" is composed of messages about how one is experiencing the transition. This internal dialogue can provide important supportive messages during the transition by allowing a rehersal of various solutions, to create alternate mental images, and to use recollection of past experiences to assist in the present situation. However, very often due to impact of the transition on lives, self talk may lead to self defeating dialogues full of statements which lower self-esteem and lead to depression.

It is especially important during times of transition to become aware of the internal dialogue which is harmful. Then one can utilize the skill of restructuring inappropriate dialogue into supportive self-talk which will assist in coping with difficult transitions. The methods for restructuring self-talk involve:

- Identifying what you are saying to yourself
- Evaluating it as a reasonable statement
- Replacing inappropriate self statements with coping or appropriate self-statements

The most difficult aspect of changing self-talk is stopping the dialogue long enough to identify what it is you are saying to yourself.

Too often our minds are filled with irrational self-statements such as "Because I've lost my job, there's no meaning in my life." "If this relationship ends, I'll never have another one." Brammer and Abrego (1979) introduced Becks' (1972) critical question format as a means of assisting restructuring of self-talk.

The following exercise is to provide you with a format and practice in identifying, evaluating, and restructuring your own self-talk regarding your particular transition. Review the exercises that you have completed about the transition so far and look for clues to the type of self-talk you may be giving yourself regarding the transition. Now proceed to the next page and answer the questions.

Step 1: IDENTIFY NEGATIVE SELF-TALK: List four examples of negative self talk you experience regarding your ability to adjust to the change or transition. For example, "I've lost my job, I'm worthless." "This is such a crushing blow, I'll never be happy again." "If this relationship ends, I'll never have another."

Step 2: EVALUATE THE NEGATIVE SELF-TALK: For each of your four negative statements you identified in Step 1, answer the following questions:

- Have I drawn a conclusion where evidence is lacking or where evidence supports a contrary conclusion? Example, Even though bad things have happened before in time, I've learned to be happy.
- Have I exaggerated the meaning of the event?

Look for words in your self-talk such as NEVER, ALWAYS, I DON'T KNOW, AWFUL, ALL.

- Are my perceptions of the situation overly simplified or rigid?

- Have I overgeneralized by taking a single incident and generating a false conclusion? For example, "My boss was unfair and overly critical, and he will always be that way." "If I don't find another job, it's ALL my fault." "If he/she wants a divorce, I must be unlovable."

Step 3: RESTRUCTURE NEGATIVE SELF-TALK: For each of your statements in Step 1, write a coping self-statement which is a positive interpretation of your change. For example, "Although it will be difficult to leave this relationship, I will probably have the opportunity for others in the future."

Statement 1:

NEGATIVE POSITIVE

Statement 2:

NEGATIVE POSITIVE

Statement 3:

NEGATIVE POSITIVE

Statement 4:

NEGATIVE POSITIVE

Activity 6: Reading: IDENTIFYING PERSONAL STRENGTHS

Personal strengths are the psychological characteristics which you bring to transitions that enable you to survive and manage the threats posed by the transition. These psychological resources are identified as maturity, personal values, and self-esteem.

Maturity

When researchers talk about maturity they refer to different frames of reference from which different individuals will approach the same situation. This frame of reference is not necessarily guided by age or by state of development. For example, you may have described a 17 year old as "being mature for his age." What you were probably noticing was that the teenager was going beyond the stereotypical thinking characteristics of his age group and was perhaps incorporating more complex, autonomous, thinking patterns. Loevinger (1976) categorized 8 states of adult ego development that individuals pass through on their life journey and which form a frame of reference for understanding the experience of a transition. The eight stages and characteristics of each follows:

STAGE	CHARACTERISTIC
1. impulsive	motivation is apparently random
2. self-protective	motivation is to satisfy needs

STAGE	CHARACTERISTIC
3. conformist	motivated to impress significant others and gain social acceptance
4. conscientious	a conformist motivated to impress others through personal competence
5. conscientious	motivated to be competent
6. individualistic	competence combined with some understanding of self
7. autonomous	motivated by understanding of self and others
8. integrated	motivated by increased capacity for tolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty, and responsibility for own destiny

Which stage of maturity do you think you are in?

Values

Your basic values and beliefs are factors which impact on your ability to assimilate and deal with transitions. Values essentially are the response to the question of "What is important in life?" This response very often not available to the conscious mind. In other words sometimes people don't know what it is they value until a crisis occurs. For example, faced with the possibility of a large promotion in a job which will bring increased money and status people may have to wrestle with loss of friends, support systems, and often geographic change. In making decisions whether

or not to accept the position, often people weigh the importance of friends, family, environment against gains in financial security and status. Choices will be influenced by the value each of these variables holds at the point in one's life. It is important to note that at different life stages certain variables in one's value system will be more important than others. Religious belief is an example of a value orientation which may be more important as people grow older and must deal with death of loved ones as well as one's own personal death. The intensification of religious belief serves as one way to sustain an individual's acceptance of one's life course.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem or lack of it plays a central role in creating distress during times of transition. The self-imposed stress caused by low self-esteem pervades daily situations and influences most interactions. Suffering becomes anxious worry, and feelings of dis-ease and fear plague the individual. These feelings may become chronic and life-long unless an attempt to change the negative feelings about the self occurs.

Self-esteem is one's sense of how good one feels about self. It is based on one's own perceptions of self, not on other people's assessments. Self-esteem does not necessarily depend on talent, beauty, or intellect, but on people's ability to accept themselves

for whom they really are and on their beliefs that they are indeed worthwhile and are deserving of love and respect from others.

Unfortunately, during transitions, people often suffer severe blows to their "hardiness" to roll with life's punches. A positive self-esteem is a key to overcoming the stress of these times so that people may meet these "punches" as challenges rather than threats to be avoided.

Activity 7: VALUES

Being clear about what one values allows individuals to demonstrate and engage in more purposeful, positive, and enthusiastic behavioral patterns. Unclear values are reflected in apathy, listlessness, disinterest, uncertainty, overconformity, and role playing. By focusing on the valuing process individuals can begin to be aware of the advantages, disadvantages, and consequences of various alternatives by considering whether actions match stated values and beliefs.

The purpose of a Values Grid is to match different issues with various beliefs and the valuing processes. This activity indicates steps which can be taken to develop stronger and clearer values.

Values Grid

Purpose

The Values Grid usually drives home the point that few of our beliefs or actions fit all seven of the valuing processes (see 7 questions after grid). This activity indicates where steps must be taken to develop stronger and clearer values.

VALUES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. issue: 1. position:							
2. issue: 2. position:							
3. issue: 3. position:							
4. issue: 4. position:							
5. issue: 5. position:							
Etc.							

1. Begin by identifying some general issues that occur in life such as war, abortion, race relations, water pollution, education, etc.

2. Underneath the identified issues, write a few key words that summarize your position on each issue.

The seven numbers heading the columns on the right-hand side of the paper represent the following seven questions:

1. Are you proud of (do you prize or cherish) your position?
2. Have you publicly affirmed your position?
3. Have you chosen your position from alternatives?
4. Have you chosen your position after thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons and consequences?
5. Have you chosen you position freely?
6. Have you acted on or done anything about your beliefs?
7. Have you acted with repetition, pattern or consistency on this issue?

3. Answer each of the above seven questions in relation to each issue. If you have a positive response to the question put a check in the appropriate box. If not, leave the box blank.

Reflective Questions

1. Are any of the general issues you listed also a part of your transition?

2. Make a grid with the values that have arisen from your transition.

3. Rank your values in order of importance to you. For example, if you identify family, money, prestige, as values that become obvious during a transition, rank their order of importance. Now check the right hand columns as you did before by referring to the 7 valuing questions. Would you like to change your position (values) on any of the issues? Is your position on the issues from your transition helpful? harmful? In what way?

4. How can you make the things you value a part of your plan for dealing with your transition?

5. How do any of your values conflict with your plan for dealing with your transition?

Activity 8: ASSESSING SELF-ESTEEM AS A PERSONAL STRENGTH

This next exercise is designed a) to assist you in assessing your self-esteem, b) to gain an understanding of some of the origins of self-esteem, and c) to assist you in making decisions to improve your self-esteem if desired.

Assessing Self-Esteem

Please complete the "Self-Esteem Checklist" by marking your response to each of the fourteen questions.

SELF-ESTEEM CHECKLIST

	almost always	often	rarely	never
1) Do you find yourself bragging or exaggerating the importance of your role?	____	____	____	____
2) Are you jealous of the possessions, opportunities or positions of others?	____	____	____	____
3) Do you find yourself judging your behavior by other people's standards or expectations rather than your own?	____	____	____	____
4) Are you possessive in your relationships with friends and/or family members?	____	____	____	____
5) Is it difficult for you to acknowledge your own mistakes?	____	____	____	____
6) Do you resort to bullying and intimidation in your dealings with others?	____	____	____	____

	almost always	often	rarely	never
7) Do you "put people down" so that you can feel "one up?"	____	____	____	____
8) Are you a perfectionist?	____	____	____	____
9) Must you be a "winner" in recreational activities in order to have fun?	____	____	____	____
10) When faced with new opportunities do you feel inadequate or insecure?	____	____	____	____
11) Do you have difficulty accepting compliments?	____	____	____	____
12) Do you refrain from expressing your feelings and opinions?	____	____	____	____
13) Do you shy away from trying new things for fear of failure or looking dumb?	____	____	____	____
14) Do you neglect your own needs in order to respond to the needs of others?	____	____	____	____

"ALMOST ALWAYS" or "OFTEN" answers to any of these questions may indicate that your level of self-esteem needs attention.

Reflective Questions

1. In what ways does your self-esteem make you more vulnerable to stress?

2. In what ways does your self-esteem contribute to your "hardiness" and your ability to deal with transitions?

3. How do you feel about your current level of self-esteem?

4. How can you increase your "hardiness" by improving your self-esteem?

Origins of Self-Esteem

MESSAGES FROM MY PAST

The messages received from people who have been important in our lives contribute to our level of self-esteem. These messages can be positive or negative.

In the space below, write the messages you recall receiving from people who have been important to you.

Examples:

Mother - "You're so rattle-brained! You'd lose your head if it weren't attached to the rest of you!"

Father - "That's my daughter -- she can do just about anything she sets her mind to."

Teacher - "He's not the brightest kid, but he sure tries hard."

Others - "How are you going to get ahead if your head is always in the clouds?"

MOTHER _____

_____

FATHER _____

_____

SIBLINGS _____

_____

CLERGY _____

_____

FRIENDS _____

_____

TEACHERS _____

_____

COACH _____

_____

OTHERS _____

_____

Reflective Questions

1. What patterns or themes do you notice in your messages from the past?

2. Are these messages accurate descriptions of you today? How?

3. Which messages would you like to keep? Get rid of? Change?

Improving Self-Esteem

As you learned in earlier exercises, negative self-talk can be changed. Sometimes the first step toward improving self-esteem is to change messages that negatively impact on feelings of self-worth. Below are some suggestions adapted from Dunlap and Stewart (1983) Keeping the Fire Alive:

- Speak up for yourself. Your opinion is valid. No one can "put you down" unless you "put them up" by deciding their viewpoint is worth more than yours. Resist such thoughts.

- Don't put yourself down. Nobody's perfect. Mistakes and failures are a normal component of life ... welcome to the human race. Instead of criticizing yourself, forgive yourself.

- Remember ... you're in charge of your life. Think for yourself. Make your own decisions! Trust your process!

- Get off the pity pot. Don't indulge in guilt trips or blaming and shaming routines.

- Believe in yourself. Stop counting on others to tell you that you count. Tell yourself!

- Be all that you can be. Don't depend on others to do things for you that you can do for yourself even if they can do a better job.

- Tend to your needs. Don't neglect yourself or subvert your needs in order to meet the needs of others.

- Be proud of yourself. You are unique and your very existence proves your innate worth.

Reflective Questions

1. Which of the above resolutions would be most helpful to you during the transition that you are experiencing now?

2. How can you remember to use these self assertions now?

3. What insights have you had about yourself as a result of this exercise? List some.

** Some parts of this activity adapted from

Structured Exercises in Stress Management, Vol II
Nancy Loving Tubesing and Donald A. Tubesing, Editors
Whole Person Press, P.O. Box 3151 Duluth, MN 55803

Activity 9: Summary of Unit II: PERSPECTIVES ON COPING

In this unit you have:

- identified your coping responses (positive and negative)
- identified your internal and external support system, and
- identified personal characteristics which you bring to transitions which occur in your life.

It should be helpful at this time to refocus on your particular transition and answer the following questions.

1. Which coping responses that you identified in Activity 3 are most appropriate to use with this transition? List them.

2. From Activity 4 list your external support system which will be useful during this transition.

3. What do I need to say to myself to help me get through this transition? (Activity 5)

4. What strengths do I have that will enable me to go through this transition? (Good self esteem, sense of humor, values, etc.) Be specific and explain how each strength you mentioned will be helpful to you in this transition.

UNIT III

PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGING TRANSITIONS

Objective III: Identify and choose ways of managing a transition

- Use a problem solving model to increase ability to make effective decisions.
- Use increased awareness of options for transition management.
- Use self reflection to integrate values and a plan of action.

Activity 1: Reading: TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

Up to this point you have been asked to identify the transition you are experiencing and to identify skills for coping with transitions. To deal constructively with transitions, however, it is important at some point to begin to apply your skills. Since decisions you make during the transition process differ from routine life decisions, it is extremely important to purposefully examine alternatives with an eye on practical applicability. Researchers (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Michenbaum, 1977; Schlossberg, 1980; Karmos, Daniels, Presley, 1983) have suggested that problem solving is one of the most important skills to apply in managing transitions.

There is no one solution for everyone, no perfect fit of one problem to one solution. Basically, problem solving becomes a way of ordering one's thoughts and resources and searching out a viable course of action (Egan, 1975, p.199). During times of transition utilizing a problem solving model enables you to act more realistically, to meet threats more constructively and to engage appropriate coping skills (identified in Unit II) effectively. It is a time to switch gears from "taking in" information to sorting out what you've learned and applying the insights to your specific transition problem. The purpose of systematic active problem solving then, is to assist you in regaining a sense of control and competence at a time when many aspects of your life are in flux.

Although differences exist in the exact ordering of steps, most problem solving tasks involve five steps.

FIVE STEP PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL

1. identifying the problem
2. exploring alternatives
3. selecting and planning a course of action
4. implementing the course of action
5. evaluating the action, learning

Problem solving skills relate in many ways to decision making skills. How you make decisions effects how you solve problems and what style of reasoning you bring to a problem solving setting. The Ohio Practical Action Curriculum (1985) suggests that skills of "practical reasoning" and decision making are, in fact, fundamental necessities for effective problem solving.

Time for Self Reflection

In other times and cultures a person in transition would go to the forest and old identities and connections would be left behind. The task was to focus on the self in the midst of the break from what was. It was a ritualized way of facing and experiencing the emptiness and confusion that are natural results of something ending. It was a time to prepare the ground and realign one's energy for emergence into a new beginning.

In our age of stress, alienation and burnout, this may be a piece of wisdom that needs to be recovered. Within the pace of change of modern life, there seems to be little room for this "gap", this "time out". With the loss of relatedness, purpose, or realities, people often come to believe that something is wrong with them and something ought to be done as quickly as possible to replace the faulty parts. Researchers (Bridges, 1980; Tubesing & Tubesing, 1985) in fact have suggested that it may be that only by turning our attention to what is occurring within us that self-renewal will come from this time of "chaos". It is a time to gain access to a "new angle of vision" needed to get from here to there in the transition process. People must begin to focus on themselves.

It is ironic that people often instinctively take the time for personal reflection when there are heavy problems. In mid transition people look for ways to be alone; to walk on the beach, go to the woods, get up earlier than the rest of the family, stay up later to enjoy the solitude. It is as if the familiar distractions no longer have meaning. People find themselves saying things like: "I just need time to think", "If I could just see what to do". They understand the necessity of using time for personal reflection and to listen to one's inner dialogue. It becomes a way of discovering meaning as people struggle with "what to do". They will clarify options or make tenative decisions during this time, or just try to clearly see what is presently going on in their lives.

Later in this unit you will be introduced to some practical suggestions and activities that will enable you to make sense out of a self-reflective experience and by doing so become more adept at using it effectively.

Activity 2: PLANNING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Already you have assessed the transition you are going through and gained insight into the impact it is having on your life. Most likely you are also utilizing one or more of your coping strategies to deal with the uncertainty, pain, or confusion you may be experiencing as a result of the transition. It is now time to begin a step-by-step planning process that will enable you to make decisions about how to manage the transition and to apply what you have learned in Units I and II to regain mastery over your life.

This planning process entails systematically going through a creative planning process designed to draw on your internal wisdom as well as your data management. Some of the steps are direct replications of the problem solving model introduced by Karmos, Presley, and Daniels (1984). These steps will be noted by an asterisk. If further Problem Solving Strategies are needed to help you through this activity, refer to the appendices under the heading Problem Solving. Be sure to remember the Five Step Problem Solving Model.

Planning Guide

I. IDENTIFY THE TRANSITION PROBLEM.*

Clearly restate your transition as a problem. For example, "I have been fired."

II. DEFINE THE PROBLEM FROM SEVERAL PERSPECTIVES.

Write three or four different descriptions of your problem. For example, "I have been fired." may also be "I am at the end of my career."

1)

2).

3)

4)

III. LEARN FROM YOUR PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

What coping strategies have you already tried? List them.

Why don't you think those strategies worked?

What coping strategies that you haven't tried do you think might work?

Refer back to Unit II to refresh your memory if you want to.

IV. CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE.

1) How do you feel about your capability to deal with this problem?

_____ hopeless

_____ doubtful

_____ maybe

_____ possible

_____ hopeful

2) To what extent are you typically a "fighter"?

_____ very much so

_____ moderate

_____ not at all

3) Relative to this transition, to what extent are you a "fighter"?

_____ very much so

_____ moderate

_____ not at all

4) To what extent are you feeling helpless about this transition?

_____ very helpless

_____ somewhat helpless

_____ not helpless at all

5) Generally, how do you feel about change?

_____ overwhelmed

_____ not affected

_____ challenged

6) How do you feel about changes resulting from this transition?

_____ overwhelmed

_____ not affected

_____ challenged

V. RE-IDENTIFY YOUR RESOURCES.

1) What strengths and skills do you bring to this transition problem? List them.

2) List your support system that you will utilize during this transition (Unit II).

VI. SPECIFY YOUR GOALS.

Goals are what you'd like to have happen. Don't limit yourself by identifying only the goals you think you can attain now. Be creative and fearless.

1) What do you want to happen? (to feel, change, accomplish, learn). Be specific.

I want _____

I want _____

I want _____

I want _____

I want _____

I want _____

2) What do you think you need to have happen?

I need _____

I need _____

I need _____

I need _____

I need _____

3) Look over the goals you have identified. What would you have to give up in order to reach each goal you identified?

4) Are you willing to make the sacrifices?

VII. FORMULATE A CLEAR PLAN OF ACTION.*

Based upon changes you want to make and the goals you have set, what could you do? Brainstorm - that is, come up with as many ideas as possible. The rule here is <u>don't</u> evaluate your ideas, quantity counts here.

	This column will be used later
I could _____	a. (1 2 3 4 5) b. (1 2 3 4 5) c. (1 2 3 4 5) d. (1 2 3 4 5)
I could _____	a. (1 2 3 4 5) b. (1 2 3 4 5) c. (1 2 3 4 5) d. (1 2 3 4 5)

I could _____ a. (1 2 3 4 5)
b. (1 2 3 4 5)
c. (1 2 3 4 5)
d. (1 2 3 4 5)

I could _____ a. (1 2 3 4 5)
b. (1 2 3 4 5)
c. (1 2 3 4 5)
d. (1 2 3 4 5)

I could _____ a. (1 2 3 4 5)
b. (1 2 3 4 5)
c. (1 2 3 4 5)
d. (1 2 3 4 5)

I could _____ a. (1 2 3 4 5)
b. (1 2 3 4 5)
c. (1 2 3 4 5)
d. (1 2 3 4 5)

I could _____ a. (1 2 3 4 5)
b. (1 2 3 4 5)
c. (1 2 3 4 5)
d. (1 2 3 4 5)

Now consider each of the following questions. (Notice the same letter in the activity you just completed).

a. Is the plan specific enough?

b. Does it have long-term value?

c. Does it have positive consequences for your family?

d. Does it reflect you as a whole person?

For each plan, consider each of the four questions (a-d) and rate each question on a scale from 1 to 5; 1 least favorable and 5 most favorable.

VIII. CHOOSE A TENTATIVE SOLUTION STRATEGY.*

Review your potential plans and choose a plan based on your highest ratings. If more than one plan seems workable use your instincts to choose the best. Write it down here.

IX. CARRY OUT THE TENATIVE SOLUTION STRATEGY.*

1) Now what exactly do you plan to do?

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

2) Check each step and make sure that each step is workable.

3) List "Who does what, when?" in implementing your solution. Be sure to include yourself and others.

X. ADD A CREATIVE TOUCH.

Sometimes creativity and humor make a plan more enjoyable. How could you make your plans more fun? (Exaggerate it? Do it backwards? Do it with a friend?)

XI. REWARD YOURSELF.

What special treats will you give yourself when you accomplish some ar all of your plan? Name as many as possible.

XII. LEARN.*

This step may not be completed until after you've actually implemented your plan. Make sure you come back to this.

1) What other choices may have been better? Why?

2) What were the consequences of your decision?

3) How effective was your plan?

4) How can you better prepare yourself for this problem (transition) if it occurs again?

(Adapted from Tubesing and Tubesing Structured Exercises in Stress Management, Vol II)

Short Form Planning Guide

I. Identify the Transition Probem.

- Restate your transition as a problem.

II. Define the Problem from Several Perspectives.

III. Learn From Your Previous Attempts to Solve the Problem.

- What Coping Strategies have you already tried?
- Why don't you think those strategies worked?
- What coping strategies that you haven't tried do you think might work?

IV. Check Your Attitude.

- How do you feel about your capability to deal with this problem?
- To what extent are you typically a "fighter"?
- To what extent are you feeling helpless about this transition?
- Generally, how do you feel about change?
- How do you feel about changes resulting from this transition?

V. Re-Identify Your Resources.

- What strengths and skills do you bring to this transition problem?
- List your support system that you will utilize during this transition?

VI. Specify Your Goals.

- What do you want to happen?
- What do you need to happen?
- What do you have to give up in order to reach your goal?

VII. Formulate a Clear Plan of Action.

- Who does what when?

VIII. Choose a Tentative Solution.

IX. Carry Out the Tentative Solution Strategy

X. Add A Creative Touch.

- How can you make your plan more fun?

XI. Reward Yourself.

- What special treats will you give yourself when you accomplish some or all of your plan?

XII. Learn - Reflect.

- What other choices may have been better?
- What were the consequences of your decision?
- How effective was your plan?

Activity 3: TIME FOR SELF-REFLECTION

Now that you have actually made a plan for handling your transition and tentatively decided "what to do", this next activity will introduce you to some practical suggestions of how to see what is really going on by actively engaging in self-reflection before you take your next step.

1) Now that you have some idea of "what to do", find some time to be alone. Plan for it. How, in the midst of all this, can you be alone? Write several ideas.

- What "inner" signals do you hear about this transition when you are alone?

2) Keep a log for a few days of your self-reflective experiences. Some questions you may focus on are:

What is really going on inside you?

What is your mood?

What puzzling or unusual things are happening?

What decisions do you wish you could make?

3) Take this opportunity to discover what you really want. Wanting, especially in times of transition, is usually a less clear matter than people realize. People usually assume they know what they want, but simply cannot get it. Lives become filled with "If only I could ... " or "I really should ... " In times of transition, however, we are no longer necessarily held back from what we want to do because our limiting circumstances are partly what ends. Now it is time to put aside all the "shoulds", "oughts", and "if only I coulds", and really search deeply for what you want. Write this in your log. Be creative, you may find what you want seems to change as you let yourself focus on you.

4) Take time to spend a few days to be alone for the sole purpose of reflecting consciously on the transition process in your own life just now. A few rules:

    1. Try an unfamiliar spot free from ordinary circumstances.
    2. Get up earlier than usual and be in the quiet.
    3. Do not spend much time with distractions, such as reading or watching T.V.

Remember - the time between the ending and a new beginning - is a particularly rich time for insight.

NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE THE ACTION THAT YOU OUTLINED IN ACTIVITY 2.

UNIT IV

LEARNING FROM TRANSITION DECISIONS

Objective IV: To gain awareness of the effectiveness of transition decisions and to apply learnings to new transitions.

- Identify learnings from the transition process.

Activity 1: Reading: LEARNING FROM TRANSITION DECISIONS

In the transition process you have become aware of the "ending" of what was, identified your skills for coping with the transition, and you may have even decided what you want to do about the transition. You may notice that after many days, weeks, or months of being preoccupied with the transition that you feel ready to launch anew to what lies ahead. This reawakening is a beginning of the transformation of energy from the internal process and preoccupation to a reattachment to the outside world. Now that you are aware that it is time for a new beginning, you are probably looking for the "checklist" you should run through to make sure that life properly starts up again. We all need and long for a simple way out, we look for a procedure to follow rather than a process to understand. But life goes on and beginnings are not always tidy.

As much as you long for external signs to point the way to the future, you must once again look for inner signs to alert you. Sometimes the first clue that you are ready to immerse yourself in a new beginning is a "hint" that comes in the form of an "idea" an "impression" or a "dream". You may notice that things just don't look/feel the same and you may experience a restlessness, a need to "get on with it". This shift, a kind of inner realignment, is the stuff of genuine beginnings. It is the unlocking of the energy which provides you with the motivation to carry on with your "new plan".

The truth is that new beginnings are accessible to everyone - you

are experiencing that now - and everyone has trouble with them. Even if you truly wish to start the new beginning it is important to know that some part of you will resist doing so as though you were making the first step toward disaster. Everyone experiences this anxiety, fear, and confusion - so know that you aren't alone.

Genuine beginnings begin within us even though they may originate with external opportunities. Once the momentum begins to take shape (hopefully, you are at that stage now) there are several things that you can do to enhance this time.

ONE: STOP GETTING READY AND ACT.

Throughout the first three units of this manual, you have been doing activities to prepare yourself to ACT. Getting ready to act can become an endless task. Sometimes it is tempting to prolong the "getting ready" stage by just making a few more preparations. Be aware that sometimes these endless preparations can become a form of resistance to the anxiety of jumping in and acting upon our decisions. It's difficult to balance the sense of timing between "jumping in too soon" and "getting ready too long". You know your inner voice - when the time comes, stop getting ready to do it - and do it!

TWO: ACTIVELY IDENTIFY YOURSELF WITH YOUR DESIRED RESULT OF THE TRANSITION.

Instead of waiting for the results of your transition decision to change you, start by changing yourself right now. One of the most elegant techniques for learning that human beings have at their disposal is the basic skill of learning by acting "as if". You can start focusing

on the successful accomplishment of your transition goal by acting "as if" you are already the person you want to be at the end of the transition. Act "as if" your transition has already come about. Many times this is how successful changes start; by acting as you wish "you" to be, by believing you are already that "you", by doing just what that person you want to be would do. This isn't a self-deception. It is a positive act of strength, an assertion that you can learn something new. It is an energizing way of building the bridge from here and now to the future you want.

THREE: TAKE THINGS STEP BY STEP.

You have carefully planned how to achieve your goal, don't become so invested in the results that the steps to reach the results look insignificant and unexciting. Remember the old saying "Rome wasn't built in a day." Trudging from appointment to appointment, making phone call after phone call, meeting with endless rounds of people, going over your budget for the twelfth time all make the path to your goal seem intermittably long and dull. Remember, however, that successful goal attainment is made from these seemingly insignificant steps. Preoccupation with results can be very damaging to the process.

FOUR: REMEMBER, THE PROCESS OF GETTING THERE IS AS IMPORTANT AS GETTING THERE.

Give yourself permission to "try on for size" the ways this change will make your life different. Change is frightening at first but rarely

does the "worst possible result" ever occur. It is time to be gentle with yourself, a time for little supports and indulgences that make things easier along the way. Remember that during transitions social mores and securities you once relied may be lost. You are actually charting new waters. The map is your own. Reward yourself for having the courage to try something new. Don't condemn yourself for stumbling on the way. You'll be amazed how often life rewards courageousness. Courage in the face of adveristy is what touches us most about all our heroes. People do not condemn a hero if he fails, he is only condemned if he does not try.

Remember, if it's worthwhile, have the courage to try it. At first, forget about how you look, or how you sound, or how foolish you may seem. After you try you can review your efforts and be a critic. Expect that at the beginning you may feel awkward and strange. Encourage yourself for having the courage to make mistakes. Risking something new is the essence of learning.

Hard choices are hard because they are not easy. You may never know which choice was the best but you'll always respect yourself for trying. That's the best any of us can do! (Ruch & Read, 1984).

"To change is a labor of love, a balance
of objective mind and intuitive heart."

Rush & Read, 1984

Activity 2: Reflective Questions: WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

Endings of what has been, the period and confusion of the in-between and the shaping of the new beginning are the rhythm of the transition process. It is a process that people experience throughout their lives. Sometimes there are a dozen little endings, hardly noticed. At other times the transition puts our lives into a whirl of confusion, unhappiness, and despair. The basic shape of the transition process is so essential to growth and change that it should be recognized and effectively used.

Hopefully this module has given you some ways of understanding, approaching, and mastering the many transitions you will face in your lifetime. As a means of clarifying your expectations and feelings about the journey you are about to begin, please answer the reflective questions below.

Reflective Questions

1) As you imagine ahead to the next weeks and months, what do you anticipate will be the high and low points of your transition?

2) What do your hopes tell you about what is important to you? What do you value?

3) How might you a) benefit, b) not benefit from this transition?

4) What have you learned from this transition experience? What have you learned about yourself?

5) Can you accept the transition and go on with your life?

Activity 3: TRANSITION CHECKLIST

As a means of summarizing your transition experience, a Transition Checklist is presented below. This checklist is a question format which you may use as a roadmap as you go through your transition process. Your answers to the questions can come from your responses to the activities in Units 1, 2, and 3.

Model for Handling Transitions

I. IDENTIFY THE TRANSITION

- What has ended? (something personal, interpersonal, family, school, friends)

- Describe the transition as best as you can. Where did it begin? (other people, job, school)

- What is the impact on you? How do you feel about the transition?

- How did the transition change your life?

II. IDENTIFY COPING RESOURCES

- Who could provide a personal support network? (emotional, physical, group, individual)

- How can you help yourself? (internal support network)

- Remember the 5 main steps for solving a problem introduced in Unit III.
  (1) Understand the problem (transition).
  (2) Brainstorm for solutions.
  (3) Choose a tentative solution.
  (4) Implement the solution.
  (5) What did you learn?

- What coping responses are most helpful to you for this transition?

- What coping responses are not helpful?

- What personal characteristics do you have that will help you through this time?

- How do you feel about your current level of self-esteem? What can you do to change it?

III. IDENTIFY AND CHOOSE WAYS OF MANAGING THE TRANSITION

a) What are various alternative <u>actions</u> for coping?

- Maybe a problem has to be solved. If so, use the 5-step model.
- Examine the positive and negative consequences of all planned actions.

b) Are you taking full advantage of the "Neutral Zone"?

- Find a regular time to be alone and to reflect on the transition.
- Identify what you really want.
- Reexamine your values and your goals.

IV. TRIAL, INTEGRATION, AND SELF-TRANSFORMATION

- In what ways is this a positive experience? A negative one?

- What did you learn from this experience? What did you learn about you?

- How might you benefit/not benefit from this experience?

- Can you accept the transition and go on with your life?

APPENDICIES

Adolescent and Adult Development

Life sweeps us along and change appears in many disguises. We all experience common life changes as we grow from childhood to maturity to old age. It is to these more predictable or developmental changes that we will now turn our attention. For our purposes we will discuss, define, and deliniate some of the more typical dynamics of physical and social change which occur in adolescence and then turn attention to some more popular notions of adult development. We will briefly look at changes which generally characterize each decade of human life from early adolescence across the adult portion of the human life span.

Adolescent Development

Adolescence is a remarkable happening. Some say it is the best of times and the worst of times. Whether or not it is the best or worst of times, it is a time of change. It is a period where boys and girls emerge from the safety of youth to become young men and women. It is a time when biological and psychological changes often make confusing and demanding pulls on adolescents' resources. Mostly, adolescence is a time when questions such as Who am I?, How do I fit in?, What do they think of me?, become the unspoken driving force behind many behaviors.

Physically, adolescence is a phenomenon which begins with a prepubertal growth spurt (growing 6" in a few months, developing "peach

fuzz" on the upper lip, developing breasts) and ending with attainment of full physical maturity.

Psychologically, adolescence refers to a state of mind, an attitude, a style of existence, and energy, which begins with puberty and ends with independence from parental control.

While there are many major developmental tasks which the adolescent faces, the major overriding task is that of making one's way as an independent person. Adolescence is the time when experimentation is the way in which this task may be accomplished. The personality may seem to change at a moments notice with new social fads, new friends, new ideas. Truly adolescents appear to be "actors" on the "stage of life". It is important to remember that the adolescent self is incompletely formed and that many of these "outrageous" performances merely reflect the culture and the times in which they are nurtured. For after all, adolescence is a time of rapid psychological and physical growth. Growth means change. The personality style which emerges at this time is, however, related to the adult self and the direction it takes will be related to and influenced by both parental and peer values.

The remainder of this section will explore the developmental tasks which adolescents confront, the physiological and psychological changes which occur, and the impact of parents and peers in that process.

Major Developmental Tasks of Adolescence

Emergence of the individual does not occur as a result of merely surviving the rigors of physical development (growing older, taller,

more muscular), but also occurs as the result of a multitude of interpersonal experiences in arenas of home, family, friends, and school. These interpersonal experiences, sometimes propelled by biological maturation, are referred to as "tasks" which the developing youngster must accomplish at various stages of growth in order to reach the next level of development. Seen in this context, the adolescent is continually playing a role in a scene with a distinct theme. If the scene is played well, the adolescent may go on to the next scene with a new theme and experience further growth and development. Failure inhibits growth and leads to disapproval by society (the audience) and difficulty with later tasks.

Havinghurst (1953) identified the major developmental tasks confronting adolescent boys and girls as:

- Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes.
- Achieving a masculine or feminine social role.
- Accepting one's physique and using the body effectively.
- Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults.
- Achieving assurance of economic dependency.
- Selecting and preparing for an occupation.
- Preparing for marriage and family life.
- Developing intellectual skills necessary for civic competence
- Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior.
- Acquiring a set of values and an ethic system a guide to behavior.

Havinghurst (1953) suggests that these 10 developmental tasks are the prerequisite learning and accomplishments necessary for successful adult living. These tasks are not simply hurdles but are in the deepest sense the experiences which help the adolescent define him/her self as a person who is on the well travelled road of finding a "self". The "self" from which one's personality can be expressed, the fulfillment of the major understanding of the adolescent.

Lets now turn attention to the people and characteristics which have been found to play an important role during this stage of growth.

Physical Characteristics

In the task of shaping an identity none is so obvious and visible as that of the physical body. The aspect of how one measures up is in many ways a literal determinant of one's self-esteem. Body image, appearance and self-esteem have been found to be related. Researchers have found that not only is how one feels about himself related to overall appearance but also to the pace of growth during these developmental times.

These individual differences in physical growth have been found to affect personal and social adjustment not only during adolescence but later on as well. Let us look at some of these individual differences and the effects they have been found to have on adolescent identity.

1) Most girls complete their growth spurt towards puberty before boys. The appearance of sex organs and secondary sex characteristics (breast development, broadening shoulders, muscle tissue in boys, rounded hips

in girls) all have a profound influence on the physical appearance, biological functioning, and psychological adjustment of the young person. These often rapid and confusing changes directly impact even how the adolescent walks through his world. A formerly cute little boy overnight seems to be all arms, falling over everything within a four foot path of his body. A petite, even-dispositioned girl seems to lose all sense of balance as she cries over everything that occurs. Rapid biological changes often make it confusing for those who live with the adolescent, as well as the adolescents themselves. During this time it is difficult for the adolescent to have anything but negative feelings about his/her newly unfamiliar and somewhat unpredictable body and therefore is also likely to feel negatively about himself as a total person.

2) Whether maturation takes place too fast or too slowly can have impact on self concept now and in the future. Many classical growth studies have emerged from the University of California and others to support this statement. What these studies have identified are the effects on personality of early and late maturation for both boys and girls. The studies concluded that behavior and development of individuals (whether early or late) may be influenced in significant and permanent ways.

	Characteristics as Adolescents	Characteristics as Adults
Early-Maturing Boys	Self-confident, high in self-esteem, likely to be chosen as leaders. (But leadership tendencies more likely in lower-class than middle-class boys.)	Self-confident, responsible, cooperative, sociable. But also rigid, moralistic, humorless, conforming.
Late-Maturing Boys	Energetic, bouncy, given to attention-getting behavior, not popular.	Impulsive and assertive. But also insightful, perceptive, creatively playful, able to cope with new situations.
Early-Maturing Girls	Not popular or likely to be leaders, indifferent in social situations, lacking in poise. (But middle-class girls more confident than those from lower class.)	Self-possessed, self-directed, able to cope, likely to score high in ratings of overall psychological health.
Late-Maturing Girls	Confident, outgoing, assured, popular, likely to be chosen as leaders.	Likely to experience difficulty adapting to stress, likely to score low in ratings of overall psychological health.

Sources: Biehler, R. & Snowman, J. (1982). Psychology Applied to Teaching. Houghton Mifflin & Co., Boston. p.115.

Overall, these findings make it clear that the rate of physical maturation may affect development specifically and personality development generally, in crucial important ways (Hamachek, 1973).

How adults and peers treat and accept an adolescent are related to some extent to the perceived physical status. During adolescence late maturing is a handicap for boys while early maturation is more of a two sided coin. On one hand it leads to certain competitive advantages, on the other hand, he may be expected to respond to expectations least more on size than maturity. For girls, however, slower maturation gains social advantages based on stereotypic views of femininity. As can be seen on the chart (figure 1) this does not necessarily hold true in later, adult life. What was a positive gain during adolescence for the girl does not insure positive adult characteristics.

3) Confusion regarding sexual relationships is a common condition of adolescence. Due to the rapid acceleration of physical developement, the adolescent becomes sexually mature while remaining psychologically and socially immature. Attitudes towards sex very often conflict with values, parental expectations, and social attitudes towards sex. Biehler and Snowman (1982) reported research by Jessor and Jessor (19) that suggested that adolescents may be motivated to have sexual relations for one or more of the following reasons:

1. To prove they have reached mature status.
2. To establish a sense of independence.
3. To affirm sexual identity.
4. To gain support for the belief that they are attractive to others.
5. To reject social conventions (establish a negative identity).
6. To gain respect from peers.

The confusion resulting from conflicts between sexual, social, and psychological experiences of maturity is further intensified by contemporary attitudes toward sex (Biehler & Snowman, 1982). It is as if there is a societal expectation that adolescents will be more sexually interested AND experienced. As a result of these prevailing attitudes it appears adolescents feel they are expected to have early sexual encounters as a means of becoming a part of the surrounding adult social world.

Unfortunately, the cost of acting out these prevailing attitudes is great. Teenage pregnancies last year alone accounted for 45,000 pregnancies in the state of Illinois alone. This cost is not only financial (many teenage mothers are unable to work and therefore receive welfare), but physical (the infant mortality rate is highest among this age group), and psychological (parenting skills are often lacking in this age group). It seems likely that many adolescents engage in premarital sex to prove to themselves and others that they are mature, to establish a sense of independence, to reject social conventions, and gain respect from peers.

Conclusion

An adolescent's height, weight, hair color, complexion, muscle tone, and proportion are very much related to feelings of personal adequacy. How a boy "sizes" up to others in his class, and how a girl

develops in comparison to her friends plays an important part in how they feel about themselves. This subjective image is dictated often by trends and fashion of the time and impacts upon the adolescent not only in the present but later in life. Acceptance and positive feedback both from peers and other adults in the environment make physical appearance an important determiner in self-esteem.

Impact of Parents on Adolescents

With greater movement towards independence of self sufficiency as a major task of adolescence, it is not surprising to find that mixed messages and tension arise between parent and child at this time. The continual and predictable struggle the parent experiences around when to let go and when to hold on often leaves the adolescent with feelings of confusion, guilt, and inadequacy. The general trend is that the adolescent grows away from family in spirit and in presence until home somtimes appears to only be a place to eat and sleep.

Research has shown, however, that parents do have an influence on values, occupational choice, and moral developement. In general, the emergence of a healthy adolescent self-image is a function of the balance between affection and control, even though it occurs differently for boys and girls. A healthy self concept, getting along with others, being accepted as a leader and assuming responsibility are the result of this balancing act between parent and child and is said to be most potent when modeling is from the parent of the same sex.

On the whole the trend in adolescent years is toward an interalization of parental values and this influence often lasts well into adult life whether or not the adolescent accepts or rejects these values. Often bitter rejection of parental values leads to quiet respect at a later time. Parents do play a critical role in influencing the shape and direction of the adolescents emerging self.

Impact of Peers on Adolescents

There seems to be little question that the peer group has enormous impact on the adolescents developing sense of self. Being accepted is important at any age, but seems almost a matter of life and death to an adolescent. The road toward independence is not so smooth and adolescents during junior high and high school seem to form a society of their own, a "culture", which overlaps with, and yet remains separate from the large society in which they live. This peer culture provides an arena within which shaping of behavior and attitudes can take place. It allows the individual to receive feedback as they try out different personality and relationship styles. Unfortunately, the values of some of the peer groups an adolescent seeks to find acceptance in require immersion in behaviors which are seen as counterproductive both to the society and to the individual. Too frequently acceptance is found through drinking, drugs, vandalism, and other negative behaviors. To understand more fully why the hold both of these

negative and positive behaviors have on the adolescent, it is important to examine more closely the function the peer group serves for the adolescent in search of identity. Ausubel (1954) has listed seven functions of the peer group.

1. Family Replacement. In some ways, the peer group takes place of the family. The peer group is an arena where an adolescent can gain status, and obtain feedback independent of parents. An in-between place before entering the world.
2. Stabilizing Influence. At a time of great change (physical and psychological) peer group membership can offer some predictability and stability. It is comforting to know others are going through many of the same experiences.
3. Self-Esteem. Being important to someone outside the family can enhance self-esteem.
4. Standards. While the peer group may provide both security and modeling for the adolescent, basic standards and values still come from the home. However, research has shown that youngsters will become more identified with peer standards when there is a strained and difficult relationship with the parents.
5. Protection. Ausubel maintains that the membership in a peer group provides some insulation from adult coercion. There is strength and safety in numbers. The peer group provides both.

6. Practice by Doing. The rituals of adolescence - dating, setting goals, participating in extra curricular activities, provide opportunity for rehearsal of experiences of adulthood. The peer group provides instant feedback on performance which will help refine and modify the emerging concept of self.
7. Modeling. The peer group often offers a phychosocial moratorium that many parents simply cannot provide.

The intense need to be liked and accepted during adolescence is neither good nor bad. In fact, much research supports that the qualities which adolescents develop that make them more or less acceptable to peers impact favorably on the view they hold of themselves.

A note of caution; although acceptance by one's peers very often leads to social success, this does not necessarily lead to healthy personal adjustment. Sometimes it is necessary to consider the price an individual pays to gain high peer acceptance. An adolescent who gives up his own inclinations in order to follow the crowd may end up lacking confidence in himself. Too often we've seen the unfortunate results of an adolescent doing anything to be liked, no matter what the price. If the behavior of the peer group includes drinking, drugs, and vandalism as part of the cohesive bond, the individual, in order to be accepted, may go against his own tendencies and maladaptively adopt these behaviors.

All in all, the peer group provides a medium within which the

adolescent can secure an identity. The adolescent MUST separate himself from parents. The typical adolescent is driven to become who he is, not who his parents are. The peer group experiences offer an arena where the adolescent can actively pursue an identity.

The peer group is a substitute vehicle through which the attainment of independence and maturity may be encouraged. Even though these behaviors that are engaged in are more "pseudo-adult" than adult, they contain enough characteristics of the behaviors found in the adult world to provide a valuable learning experience.

Adolescence is the time and the peer group is the place where overall socialization, feelings of adequacy, and worthwhileness are tested and formed.

Adult Development

Life involves continuous change. Some changes can be initiated and some are part of a life cycle and cannot be avoided. As a result of improvements in medical technology and nutrition we find ourselves with a society of individuals who have added years to the average lifetime. No longer can life be seen as a period of rapid change and growth for 18 - 20 years followed by a lull of stability for fourty years until death. That adults change rather than simply age and that adulthood is not a period of stability followed by decline have been noted by many psychologists and social scientists.

Documentation of the changes which occur in adulthood has been undertaken in many disciplines. While each discipline reaches unique and often contradictory conclusions and focuses on different points, there are similarities between and among them.

As a means of organizing the growing and massive body of research on adult development one can place the major theoretical perspectives into one of three orientations. Each of the three orientations has a major focus or theme of adult development. The three major perspectives are: Age and Stage Perspectives, Life Event Perspectives, and Individual Timing Perspectives. Each of these three perspectives will be discussed.

Age and Stage Perspective

One approach to understanding adult development has been through the documentation of adult life stages. Researchers noted phases, stages, and life cycles in which adults similar in age seem to face

common problems, events, or tasks to master. These stage theories can be catagorized by their major orientation: a) based on age, b) based on issues (tasks) that relate to development, c) based on ethical and moral development and ego development. The unifying factor of all the age and stage theories is the assumption that these experiences are related to age; that is individuals tend to pass through similar experiences at similar ages.

Based on age

Integrating the work of many authors there is an unfolding of relatively universal, age-linked developmental periods that emerge in a fairly orderly sequence. The life stage for the late teens and early twenties has been labeled "leaving the family" (Levinson, et.al, 1974); the focus of this stage is separation from the family, reduction of dependence on family for financial and emotional support, and definition of oneself as an adult. In the early twenties to early thirties the life stage may be labeled "provisional adulthood" (Sheehy, 1974). There is an end to formal education and a possible commitment to settling down with responsibilities of marriage, family, and occupation. This time period involves a tentative commitment of adult roles. This first decade of adulthood offers many new opportunities and experiences - some pleasant and rewarding, others not. In the late twenties and early thirties the life stage may be called "age thirty transition" (Levinson, et. al, 1974, Sheehy, 1974). This stage focuses on leaving provisional adulthood and focuses on questioning

the self and the relationships defined in the previous stage. Experience propels one toward the early thirties stage of "settling down" (Levinson, et.al, 1974). No longer is the individual youngest on the job, the last of one's children are born, in fact some may even be entering adolescence. The body begins to remind one of the aging process as extra pounds become more difficult to loose. During this decade there is a deep commitment to work and family interests, while at the same time there is the growing concern for "whether one has done the right thing" regarding family and self. This second decade of adulthood, in reality, seems to involve the most dynamic changes in the adult life span.

As individuals progress to the late thirties and early fourties "mid-life transition" occurs (Levinson, et.al, 1974). Time and the meaning of life become more important. The individual realizes that there may be constraints on all the accomplishments one hoped to attain. A search for deeper meaning to one's life very often begins as the dreams of younger years begin to fade. Health takes on a greater importance as the body begins to show signs of the aging process. As "mature years (45 plus) approach, there is a lessening of pressure to achieve. The bondage of family is often lifted and there may be an initial time to floundering to identify new roles. It is a time when individuals very often can choose to enrich their lives with new experiences. Health, diets, physical fitness schemes, establishing new relationships and abandoning old, self improvement

programs, all represent attempts to extend and enhance satisfaction and the quality of remaining life. The Golden Years (60 plus) are a time when chronology is not all that makes a difference. One's state of mind, perspective and mental health make a real difference between those who are psychologically "dried up" at sixty and those who remain alert and dynamic far later. During this time, retirement, physical deterioration, maturity of grandchildren, exclusion from leadership roles, increased exposure to death generally occur. While many use these "golden years" to extend or enhance life and the only satisfaction they derive from it, others find it a time of lonelyness and boredom.

Based on stage

Another view of adult development asserts that adults pass through a predictable series of stages. These stages are not as closely bound by age as the theories previously mentioned, but are bound by resolution of tasks presented at each stage. That is, some individuals may pass through a stage rather quickly and others may remain "stuck" at a stage and never move on. Erikson (1950), chief proponent of this theoretical orientation suggests that there are eight stages in the progression, each stage is characterized by a critical issue which must be resolved before moving on.

The adult stages are: identity versus role diffusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and ego integrity versus despair.

Identity versus Role Diffusion

Erikson (195) postulates that these themes that he identifies are not resolved once and for all, but that they recur throughout an individual's life. They are sequential. Underlying all other recurrent themes of adulthood is that of identity. Even though the initial crisis of identity typically occurs in late adolescence, in a broader sense we can say that the crisis of identity reawakens whenever the individual is confronted with a major transition (Schlossberg, 1980). For example, a man whose major identity is attached to career will suffer trauma at the onset of retirement. Identity issues are continually confronted through work, family, leisure, and the stage theorists support that shifts in identity occur over the life course.

The theme of identity then, has characteristics of both stability and change. Changes in roles, circumstances and hence changes in perspectives force the identity theme to reemerge. The individual's identity has two major parts: the I that is not related to others and the I that is interdependent. Theorist (Neugarten, Levinson, etc.) look at identity over a live course. Erikson sums up the dichotomy of this stage as:

- Identity. Has strongly defined social roles; feel comfortable in work, family, sex role... is definite about self and who he or she is; feels continuity with past and present.
- Role diffusion. Ill at ease - lost in groups... may make radical switches in work, residence, without meaning or purpose.

Intimacy versus Isolation

Erikson (1950) suggestes the crisis of intimacy begins to occur in the early twenties. The critical task is to form a relationship characterized by mutuality. The term intimacy is not limited to relationship to one particular individual, but can cover a wide range of human ties: spouse, lover, parents, friends.

The importance and necessity of close interpersonal relationships cannot be exaggerated. In fact each of at least one attachment figure is said to place individuals in a high risk population. That is there is lack of support during time of stress as well as contributing to shorter life span. Intimacy is seen as that which gives texture and tone to an often drab existence. The ability to risk intimacy with another human being can turn a simple walk in the woods into a peak experience.

Erikson's dichotomies may be expressed as:

- Intimacy. Is able to have close intimate relationships with others and is able to share thoughts, feelings, and experiences with them.
- Isolation. Lives relatively isolated, avoids contact with others and is absorbed in self. What is essential to understand here is that often the individual experiences isolation even in the company of others. This theme is based more on the ability to perceive oneself as experiencing closeness.

Generativity versus Despair

Erikson suggests that generativity occurs typically around mid-life. It is a time when failure to resolve issues of "mid-life" crisis results in stagnation and the continual feeling that one is in a rut. Generativity by definition includes renewal. It is the ability to experience renewal as an individual and also contribute to future generations through creativity and productivity. The capacity to experience, endure through change, and fight stagnation is the aspect of generativity present at this stage.

Ego Integrity versus Despair

This stage (occuring in old age) is characterized by acceptance of one's life as something that had to be as it was. Despair expresses the feeling that the time is too short to change things, to attempt another start, to try an alternate route. Some find this a time of quiet, soft existence in which cares and responsibilities are few, a time when one is free to do those thing which one always wanted to do. Others find themselves misunderstood, lonely, bored and waiting for death.

Gould (1978) another stage theorist expands Erikson's notions by suggesting that adult development is further influenced by the struggle for freedom from internal constraints of childhood, this sequential process of fluctuation is defined by the relationship of the self to its inner and outer worlds.

Based on Ethical, Moral, Cognitive or Ego Development

This rather large group of theorists, still classified as stage theorists, all see the individaul as passing through sequences of stages, the differences between the theories rests with the distinctions of how the world is processed by the individual.

One theorist, Perry (1970), presents a model of cognitive development. The stages he identifies are based on attitudes found to reflect the nature of knowledge and thinking. His hierarchical stages are:

- Basic duality - the world is viewed as good/bad, right/wrong.
- Relativism - all knowledge and values are contextual and relativistic.
- Commitment - Alghough absolute certainty is impossible, some kind of personal commitment is needed. It is through commitment that individuals affirm their identity.

Loevinger (1976) presents a theory of ego-development which enables one to differentiate among those who are facing a similar task for example, divorce or marriage. She postulates that each adult will process that experience differently according to a "master trait". The earliest stage she identifies is Self-protective. This stage applies to an individual who follows rules, thinks in stereotypes and is a conformist. The next stage Self-aware finds individuals able to think in terms of alternatives, exceptions and multiple possiblities in various situations. The most mature stage Autonomous, is present when an adult can make commitments, tolerate ambiguities, and incorporate opposites.

All these theories see development as a progression from simple to complex; from an external to an internal dependency; from absolute dogmatism to an increasing tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty; and from strong self-focus on conformity to a mature focus on interdependence with others.

Life Events and Transition Perspective

This next major group of theoretical perspectives is based on the understanding that it is not as important, for example, to know that a person is 40 years old, but to know that he/she is 40 and about to be divorced, or 40 with adolescent children. Lowenthal, et al (1975) found that life events are more important than chronological age in evaluating an individuals behavior. For example, men who face retirement may encounter many of the same problems regardless of whether they are 40, 50, or 60. This view of life-event framework is counter to adult stage theories where life is characterized by unidirectional, hierarchial stages.

Researchers in this fairly recent approach to adult development suggest that this perspective identifies those "critical life-events" which give shape and direction to various aspects of an individuals life. Out of this view of adult development has come theories which stress how to cope with life strains (Pearlin, 1982) and hassles (Lazarus, 1981).

Individual Timing and Variability Perspective

Neugarten (1976) suggests that if we are to understand an individual we must view it in a historical context, and as this context changes, the precriptions for age-appropriate behavior are lessening. She views that individuals are bound by three types of time constraints

1. historical (calender time)
2. life time (chronological age)
3. socially difined time (which relates to age norms and expectations)

In view of the increasing number of individuals changing careers, returning to school, shifting roles of families, it becomes increasingly necessary to revise and reevaluate our "social clocks". Neugarten's theory highlights the interraction of various "timetables" in ordering of major life events and suggests that understanding major life events from stage only is an inadequate orientation.

What the individual timing theorists suggest is that although there seems to be an internalization of age-appropriate behaviors which determine social clocks, it is not so much biology but an individuals set of assumptions about age - appropriate behavior which determines their behavior. These assumptions often lead to stereotypes in social and work settings. For example, older workers are viewed as relatively inflexible, less creative and less mentally alert than younger ones. This distortion creates an aggregate system of messages supported by the media and other social institutions. In this way the paradox is

lived out; there is no biological reason for adults to behave in a particular way, yet many adults control their behavior by means of social norms and constraints.

Conclusion

This brief overview of the work that presently exists on adulthood certainly challenges the older view of adulthood as a period of stability and certainty. While theorists appear to disagree as to the cause and predictability of change, they are clear that adults continually experience change both within themselves and their lives. Each theoretical view allows that as an individual believes they have achieved a sense of self, a sense of competence, these become illusive. Where they are as an ending becomes a new beginning.

MODEL FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

To adapt to the ever accelerating rate of change in your life it will be necessary to have various strategies for how to approach and solve problems. A General Planning model has already been given to assist you with transitions in your life. The model incorporated many of the steps identified by researchers as necessary components of problem solving. This section will introduce you to our Five Step Model for Solving Problems and many expanded problem solving strategies which may help you get "unstuck" during times of stress and change. Take time to examine these strategies and begin to use them. Remember, every problem is different. Some problems may be more difficult than others and therefore may require more than one strategy to get to resolution. We have found it useful to first go through our Five Step Model as such and then learn to use other strategies. These additional strategies have been found helpful in the problem solving process by expanding your options and making life more manageable. The additional strategies follow after the Five Step Model.

Five Step Model for Solving Problems

1. Understand the Problem
   - If people are involved, then there should be explicit agreement among the people on what the problem is.
   - If appropriate, analyze the problem for possible causes. (In mathematics causes are usually not involved.)
2. Brainstorm for Possible Solution Strategies
   - No evaluations or judgments should occur here. This should be a free-wheeling act of generating ideas.
3. Choose a Tentative Solution Strategy
   - For "people" problems, consequences of behaviors and solutions must be carefully considered.
   - If people are working out an interpersonal problem, then the tentative strategy will likely be a compromise.
4. Carry Out the Tentative Strategy
   - In implementing most strategies involving people, it is important to decide, "Who, does What, When."
5. Learn
   - Immediately and over time think about what can be learned from the experience. What are the implications of what has been done?
   - If appropriate, evaluate the effectiveness of the solution. (You may have to start over.)

Strategies for Solving Problem -- General Guidelines

Besides the Five Step Model, other strategies are also essential. The ones we have chosen are useful across many different kinds of problems. Some of the strategies are: consider all the factors surrounding a problem. Think about the consequences of any proposed solution. Consider other points of view. Break the problem into parts. Reason critically. And manage your time wisely. One of the most well known writers about general guidelines for problem solving is Edward deBono.

Guidelines from deBono

Edward deBono has formulated guidelines for good thinking and problem solving. His system has been adopted by corporate executives, taught in schools, and studied by government officials from more than a score of countries. Here are basic tools taken mostly from deBono's The Learning-To-Think Coursebook (1982).

1. Consider all Factors and Don't Limit Perceptions.

A conscious effort should be made to think of everything that might be relevant for solving the problem. Suppose you're thinking about buying a new house. Consider all factors to be sure you ask all the right questions. While obvious issues such as size, cost and layout are bound to come to mind, without a deliberate effort to list every relevant factor you might overlook others. How good is TV reception? Is there a local leash law? Can the pipes be drained quickly in case of a power failure in freezing weather?

Try this experiment: Look around the room for red objects. (Don't read on until you've done so.) Now close your eyes and ask yourself how many green objects there are. Look again. Surprised? It was your focused attention on red that kept you from noticing things of another color.

Even after using various tools of thought, you may not have found a satisfactory solution to your problem. The key to finding alternatives is to look for possibilities outside your usual thinking patterns. Edison, in searching for a light-bulb filament, tried thousands of unlikely materials including cork, fishing line and tar, before succeeding with a strip of carbonized cardboard.

2. Consequences and Sequels.

One of the traits that makes us different from animals is our ability to imagine the outcome of our actions. But we can greatly improve this ability by learning to use it in a systematic way. The deBono technique is to image the probable outcome of a decision at four distances in the future: Immediate, short term (1 to 5 years), medium term (5 to 25 years) and long term (over 25 years). By weighing the consequences of thoughts and actions, people can be less impulsive and make better decisions for themselves, based upon careful thought and not on quick emotion.

3. Aims, Goals, Objectives.

An often unused tool of better thinking is the practice of making a list of reasons for doing a particular thing. Often people assume they know what their goals are, but often they have hidden or unconsidered goals that get in their way. Also, people will often just "act out" without considering whether the behavior will get them what they want.

Setting priorities and goals can help people be more efficient. Sometimes there are so many things to do that it is overwhelming. To sit down and list the first priority, then the second, etc., can help the tasks become manageable.

Defining goals can also help lead to creative solutions to problems. DeBono tells of a grandmother trying to knit while her yarn was being tangled by the family toddler. Exasperated, she put him in his playpen, but he howled so loudly that she had to take him out. Then she realized that her goal wasn't to pen the child, but to separate him from her yarn. So she solved the problem by leaving him out--and climbing into the playpen herself.

4. Other Points of View.

Often problems involve a conflict with someone such as a friend, parent, boyfriend, or girlfriend. It is the mark of a good problem solver to be able to find a solution that will agree with the other person's viewpoint. It is particularly difficult to do when one is upset or angry. But if you can take another person's point of view at such times, then you have one of the major skills of good problem solvers.

DeBono tells of an incident where he bought a new car radio from a dealer who recommended it highly. It proved no better than the one it replaced. He was about to charge into the dealer's store and demand his money back, but it occured to him to put himself in the dealer's place. Doing this, deBono saw how offended he'd be at having his judgement questioned. So he took a different tack and appealed to the dealer's sense of self-respect. The dealer exchanged the radio for a much better one, without charging the difference.

Guidelines from Whimbey and Lochhead

An additional set of guidelines for problem solvers is given by Authur Whimbey and Jack Lochhead in Problem Solving and Comprehension (1979). They describe the beliefs, practices, and tendencies of good problem solvers, and also the characteristics of poor problem solvers.

1. Positive Attitude.

Good problems solvers have a strong belief that reasoning problems can be solved through careful, persistent analysis. Poor problem solvers, by contrast, frequently express the opinion that "either you know the answer to a problem or you don't know it, and if you don't know it you might as well give up or guess." Poor problem solvers haven't learned that a problem may at first appear confusing and that the way to work the problem can be gradually analyzed and solved. Poor problem solvers lack both confidence and experience in dealing

with problems through gradual and sometimes lengthy analysis. If you become impatient it is a helpful strategy to remember problem solving progresses one step after another until the problem is solved.

2. Thoroughly Understanding the Data and the Problem.

Good problem solvers take great care to understand the facts and the relationships in a problem fully and accurately. They are most compulsive in checking whether their understanding of a problem is correct and complete. By contrast, poor problem solvers generally lack such an intense concern about understanding. For example, good problem solvers sometimes reread a problem several times until they are sure they understand it. Poor problem solvers, on the other hand, frequently miss a problem because they do not know exactly what it states. Poor problem solvers have not learned how important it is to try to be completely accurate in understanding all of the ideas of a problem. Learn to carefully analyze the given data before you try to solve the problem.

3. Breaking the Problem into Parts.

Good problem solvers have learned that analyzing complex problems and ideas often consists of breaking the ideas into smaller steps. They have learned to attack a problem by starting at a point where they can make some sense of it, and then proceeding from there. In contrast, poor problem solvers have not learned the approach of breaking a complex problem into sub-problems--dealing first with one step and then another.

4. Avoid Guessing.

Poor problem solvers tend to jump to conclusions and guess answers without going through all the steps needed to make sure that the answers are accurate. Sometimes they make intuitive judgments in the middle of a problem without checking to see whether the judgments are correct. At other times they work a problem part of the way, but then give up on reasoning and guess on an answer. Good problem solvers tend to work problems from beginning to end in small, careful steps.

The tendency for problem solvers to make more errors--to work too hastily and sometimes skip steps--can be traced to the three characteristics already discussed. First, poor problem solvers do not strongly believe that persistent analysis is an effective way (in fact the only way) to deal with problems. Thus their motivation to persist in working an entire problem precisely and thoroughly, until it is completely solved, is weak. Second, they tend to be careless in their reasoning. They have not developed the habit of continuously focusing and checking on the accuracy of their conclusions. And third, they have not learned to break a problem into parts and work it step-by-step. As a result of these three characteristics, poor problem solvers have a strong tendency to make hasty responses as they work through reasoning problems.

5. Activeness in Problem Solving.

The final characteristic of good problem solvers is the tendency to be more active than poor problem solvers when dealing with problem solving. Put simply, they do more things as they deal with a problem. For example, if a written description is hard to follow, good problem

solvers may try to create a mental picture of the ideas in order to "see" the situation better. If a presentation is lengthy, confusing, or vague, they try to pin it down in terms of familiar experiences and concrete examples. Furthermore, they will ask themselves questions about the problem, answer the questions, and "talk to themselves" as they try to clarify their thoughts. They may try a flow-chart, brainstorm for possibilities, write on the problem, make diagrams, or use other physical aids to thinking. All in all, good problem solvers are active in many ways which help them get a clearer understanding and how to progress through them.

6. Problem Solver's Knowledge Base

Robert Glaser (1984) stated that there are differences between novice and expert problem solvers and that one of the most striking differences is the knowledge base that the problem solver brings to the task. Very often a problem cannot be solved due to insufficient knowledge about the task at hand. The lack of sufficient knowledge inhibits brainstorming for solutions, decreases the ability to construct analogies, make discoveries, see patterns, and establish new relationships. A good question to ask oneself is "What more do I need to know to solve this problem?"

SOME SPECIFIC PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES

There are other strategies that can help people become better problem solvers. The ones to be discussed here are: thinking aloud, using the trial and error method, working backwards, finding all the possibilities, managing time, logical and critical reasoning, and gathering and analyzing data. Utilizing these strategies can assist you in becoming a confident and skillful problem solver.

Thinking aloud

When using this strategy, people say aloud their thoughts while attempting to solve a problem in the presence of others. All mental processing, however, need not be vocalized, for example, it is not reasonable to explain the meaning of every word used to describe a problem. When you are unsure of what to do, or are confused by an idea, or need to stop for some time to think about it, then some thinking aloud may be appropriate. When the strategy is used, try to think aloud as much as possible. Expressing thoughts, especially at sections of a problem where difficulties or hesitancy arise, is a good way to aviod skipping steps in reasoning, jumping over important information, or being unaware of the point at which being bogged down occured. By letting others hear your reasoning, they may be able to help your problem solving efforts.

Thinking aloud while solving problems requires practice. At first, you may find it difficult to vocalize your thoughts with others. But

you do get used to expressing in words the steps taken and gain confidence in "talking out" the problem.

Trial and Error

Trial and error is often underestimated as a problem solving strategy, but it can be a key strategy for some problems. In the search for a solution, trial and error can be applied systematically by simply trying different solutions to see if they work. More often than not, however, the search can be narrowed by taking into account relevant knowledge and, by inference, reducing the number of solutions to be tried.

Trial and error can also be advantageous in getting a feel for a problem. Trying out a reasonable guess, even if it does not work, can give valuable information.

Thinking about the information gained from an imperfect attempt can be applied to solutions of many problems. Suppose a father and his daughter are problem solving about the condition of her room, particularly about the dirty clothes on the floor and on the furniture. An idea to try might be a clothes hamper in her room. Both would agree that it is a trial solution to be evaluated, say, in three weeks. If the solution is not the right one, the attempt still will help to clarify the problem and suggest a better solution.

One roadblock to becoming a good problem solver is reluctance to take a risk. Many adults have been conditioned over the years to believe that there is some strategy or way to proceed in solving a problem that

they "should" have learned, and if they can't "remember how to do this kind of problem," they simply give up. Indeed, there are many specific approaches to problems that can be learned. But good problem solvers are not hampered by the conviction that there is ONE way to solve a problem. They do not rely on some outside authority, but have confidence in their own ability to generate ideas. Encourage your own self reliance by learning to make reasonable guesses and using trial and error to gain insight into a problem.

Working Backwards

Sometimes it is easier to solve a problem by working backwards rather than attacking the problem head on. Working backwards involves a change in perspective in that the new starting point was the original goal and the original starting point the new goal. Working backwards can be helpful because problems are often easier solved in one direction than another.

As an example, consider the following problem from Moshe Rubenstein's Patterns of Problem Solving (p. 19).

> PROBLEM How many tennis matches of single elimination must be played by 1025 players before a winner is declared?
>
> Most of our students start at the beginning by figuring there would be initially 512 games with one player getting a bye. Next there would be 256 matches with one bye, then 128 (1 bye), 32 (1 bye), 16 (1 bye), 8 (1 bye), 4 (1 bye), 2 (1 bye), 1 (1 bye), finals. The sum of 512, 256, 123 . . . 4, 2, 1, 1 is 1024.

It is much more direct and general to start from the end and view one winner and 1024 losers and note that each loser would play one losing game in a single elimination tournament. So there would be 1024 matches.

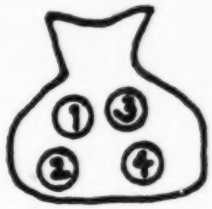
This working backwards technique not only yields a solution, it also displays a unique strategy that can be used on many problems. The solution path for this problem is more important than the answer since the path yields a general method for solving such problems--work backwards. The solution is known for any number of N players; it is N - 1.

Working backwards has many useful applications. Suppose you are writing a position paper to your boss to convince her to accept a particularly crucial idea. In thinking about how to draft the paper, you might begin by working backwards and ask yourself, "What kinds of questions would she ask me? What would be her major objections? How do I keep from offending her?" By working backwards, by starting with the goal, a more convincing paper can be written.

Finding All the Possibilities

Another important strategy for problem solving is to have a systematic way of listing all possible outcomes of some occurrence. The system must insure that all possibilities are listed and also that only those possibilities which "make sense" from the structure of the problem are listed. An example of an orderly way to list all possible ways for something to happen or all possible arrangements is shown below. Thinking exercises about drawing marbles from bags are useful for developing orderly ways to exhaust all possibilities and they are generalizable to a large number of actual situations.

EXAMPLE. Suppose there are four marbles in a bag, numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4. What are all the ways to draw out the marbles if, once a marble is drawn, it is not returned to the bag? One orderly way of thinking is to actually make a list with the help of a running conversation with oneself:



"OK. Suppose I happen to take out the 1 first?" 1

"Now, I'll list all the ways if the 2 comes second. (Then later, if the 3 comes second and if the 4 comes second.) So there is 12 followed by 34 and 12 followed by 43. And there is no other way for 1 followed by 2." 1 2

1 2 3 4
1 2 4 3

"Now, what are all the ways for 1 first and 3 second? There is 13 followed by 24 and 13 followed by 42. And there is no other way for 1 first and 3 second." 1 3

1 3 2 4
1 3 4 2

"Finally, what are all the ways for 1 first and 4 second? There is 14 followed by 23 and 14 followed by 32. And there is no other way for 1 followed by 4." 1 4

1 4 2 3
1 4 3 2

A similar conversation goes on with oneself to generate all the arrangements when 2 is drawn first, when 3 is drawn first, and when 4 is drawn first. The results:

2 1 3 4	3 1 2 4	4 1 2 3
2 1 4 3	3 1 4 2	4 1 3 2
2 3 1 4	3 2 1 4	4 2 1 3
2 3 4 1	3 2 1 4	4 2 3 1
2 4 1 3	3 4 1 2	4 3 1 2
2 4 3 1	3 4 2 1	4 3 2 1

So, there are 24 ways to draw four marbles in order if the drawn marble is replaced in the bag. Every possibility is listed and there are no more.

Very often, the number of ways to do something or the likelihood of an event occurring is important information for solving a problem, not only in mathematics, but also in other situations. It is a skill that can and should be taught as one of many problem solving strategies.

Time Management

Time management can influence problem solving. Poor scheduling can lead to insufficient time to work through a solution to a problem, or perhaps to never even getting to the problem. Problems can be solved only by taking time to solve them. An appropriate amount of time must be allocated for reflecting on the problem, for considering different ways to approach a solution, and for reviewing and critiquing the steps used. The pressure that can result from poor scheduling can cause subpar problem solving by limiting the amount of planning time and the time needed for patient deliberation. Patience and perseverance is often a key to good problem solving. A necessary condition for this is good time management skills.

Keeping a chart of activities as a basis for managing their time better is recommended. Time priorities often have to be set each day and a chart or list can help. Some individuals do not manage their time well enough to acquire an essential piece of knowledge, get to the library, or talk to someone who can help them. Allocating specific blocks of time to specific tasks according to their importance and the time they require is a useful skill.

Systematic reflection on one's use of time and on how much is lost if it is used inefficiently can lead to modification of behavior.

Time management requires scheduling, but flexibility in following a schedule is also important. For example, there is a problem solving strategy which is useful when one has come to a dead end or exhausted all ideas for approaching a problem. Wickelgren (1974) calls the strategy "incubation" and it means simply to get away from the problem for a while. It is a common experience to "sleep on a problem" and to solve it with a new insight the next day. Even when time is limited, as in taking an exam, going on to other problems and then coming back can be useful.

The key to time management, then, is to recognize the need for time to gather information, to try different ideas, to critique solutions, and also to have the flexibility in one's schedule for some incubation time.

Critical Reasoning

Critical reasoning is another area where skills are lacking for assessing expressed ideas, beliefs, and statements which are encountered daily through the media and through remarks made by people in the form of opinions, reports, rumors, etc. Most people would like to be able to critically analyze information and situations that they encounter daily.

The process of critical inquiry is an impartial one. Judgments and evaluations are delayed until the data is in. Observations, people's opinions, collected information, etc., should all be in before decisions are made. The process is to be objective, avoiding preconceived versions of the results. The problem solver should be open to inviting further inquiry if people are not satisfied or problems are not resolved. Also, in critical inquiry people's feelings are often involved. Respect for people's personal dignity must be remembered when people are the objects of the inquiry.

Another important part of critical inquiry is evaluating the assumptions being made during the inquiry. If assumptions are not clearly in mind, then invalid conclusions can be drawn, inappropriate decisions made, or people's feelings hurt. An example from Joan Hearn's (1982) More Life Skills is:

> Willie Jones is a fifteen year old, Grade 10 student who spent Saturday night breaking windows at his high school.
>
> His mother's assumption is that he is a crazy, mixed-up kid.
>
> His father's assumption is that boys will be boys.
>
> His principal's assumption is that there are too many boys like Willie about and that the school is better off without them.
>
> The police's assumptions are that public property must be protected and wrong doers must be discouraged.

It is clear that if Willie's mother were to discuss Willie's activities with his high school principal, neither of them would get anywhere

because they would be arguing from different assumptions.

People can improve their critical reasoning skills. And it is evident from our experience that there is no substitute for practice.

Gathering, Recording, and Analyzing Data

The first step in the Problem Solving model is to understand the problem. When full information is presented to a student, understanding the problem involves careful reading, eliminating extraneous information, and for some problems, drawing a sketch or a diagram or organizing given data in a table. These are the usual kinds of problems students are given in school. Unfortunately, most problems encountered in one's life (at work, at home, or socially) are not so "neat." Crucial or helpful information is often missing and the problem solver must have skills not only for obtaining necessary information, but also for recognizing what information is needed. Some examples of such problems follow.

- **How can productivity be increased in Plant A?**
- **How can the absentee rate be reduced?**
- **What is the least expensive way to get Job X done, considering labor costs, cost of materials and employee morale?**
- **How do I get my car started so I can get to work on time this morning?**
- **What steps can I take to effect a behavior change in Person Y?**
- **To cut costs and maintain sales volume, where can money best be saved in the production of Product X, packaging or advertising?**
- **What is the best solution for a problem involving a disagreement between labor and management?**

- How can the quality of on-the-job training be improved to teach skills more efficiently?
- What are the important variables for increasing morale?
- How can I plan my finances to reserve X amount of money per month for investments?

Data-gathering can occur on many levels. In some cases, unstructured observation is useful. For example, simply watching a production line for an hour could help a person to generate ideas for a more structured efficiency study. Or a task-oriented group could be observed for clues about group discord. More analytical data-gathering involves the use of checklists or coding of events or behaviors. Once data is collected, a second skill is to summarize the information in a meaningful form. If the information is quantitative, data from a checklist can be recorded in a variety of kinds of graphs, tables, or figures. Non-quantitative observation can be categorized or written up as a case study. The skill of selecting a way to represent data interacts with a third skill: Analyzing observational results.

General Motors recognizes that data-gathering is often critical for problem-solving. The manual they use for training employees to conduct Employee Participation Groups includes the following data-gathering skills:

1. Making Check Lists. The following examples from the GM manual show how information can be organized about two different aspects of possible causes of a parts shortage (e.g., type of part and number of shortages by month). Direct observations are recorded as they occur.

Type Of Part	Number Of Shortages By Month												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
001	✓												
002	✓✓												
003													
004													
005													
006													
Other													
Unknown													
Total													

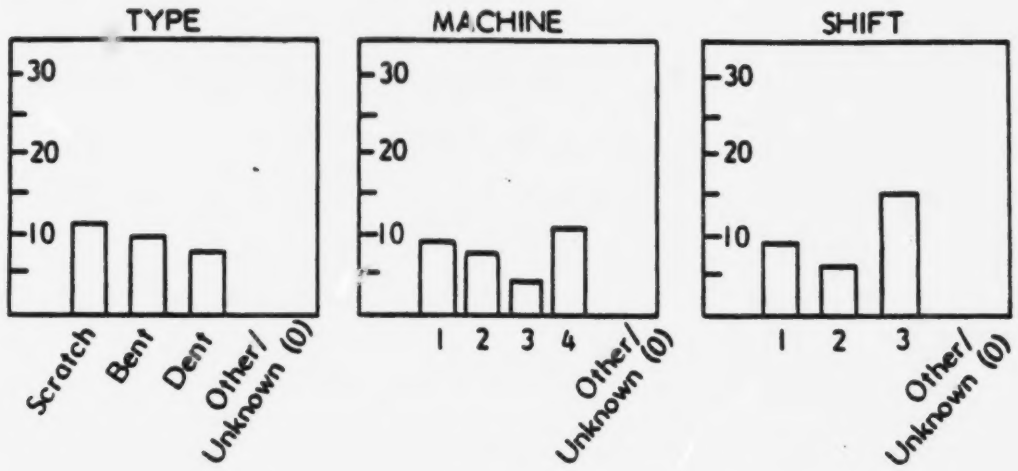
Type Of Part	Number Of Shortages By Shift				
	1	2	3	Other	Total
001	✓				
002		✓	✓		
003					
004					
005					
006					
Other					
Unknown					
Total					

Type Of Part	Length Of Shortage				
	1 Hr.	1 Wk.	1 Mo.	Other	Total
001		✓			
002	✓		✓		
003					
004					
005					
006					
Other					
Unknown					
Total					

2. Making Charts. Information from check lists can be recorded in charts which help the problem-solver to analyze the problem to be solved. An example:

Type Of Reject	Machine				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Scratch	4	2	1	5	12
Bent	3	1	2	4	10
Dented	1	4	1	2	8
Other/Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8	7	4	11	30

A second kind of chart is a bar graph. The following graphs indicate that possible causes of rejects to consider first might be (1) something making scratches (12 of the 30 rejects); (2) involved with the 4th machine (11 of the 30 rejects); (3) on the 3rd shift (15 of the 30 rejects).



THE FIVE STEP MODEL EXTENDED FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

The Five Step Model has been developed as an aide for solving problems. It is extended here to show the aforementioned strategies can be embedded within the model.

Extended Model

1. Understand the problem
   - What are the essential data?
   - Is there enough information to solve the problem?
   - Would a figure or sketch help? Maybe introduce symbols or other variables.
   - Separate the problem into manageable parts, if needed. Write down each part.
   - Can the problem be restated in a different way to help understand it?
2. Brainstorm for Possible Solution Strategies
   - Generate a lot of ideas. Don't judge them, just write them down.
   - Has a problem like it been solved before?
   - Would working a related problem be useful?
   - If there were some particular additional information, could the problem be solved? Where would the information be obtained?
3. Choose a Tentative Solution Strategy
   - Remember, the strategy may not work and the process may have to be started over.

- For "people" problems, consequences associated with carrying out tentative strategies must be carefully weighed.
- Also, if people are working out an interpersonal problem, then the tentative strategy will likely be a compromise. No one is likely to get everything they want.

4. Carry Out the Tentative Solution Strategy
   - Check each step as the plan is carried out. Check that each step is OK. Is each step correct or valid?
   - Are there probably places for errors, mistakes, or faulty reasoning? Where are they?
   - Would it be useful to have someone else go over your steps?
   - For implementing solutions to "people" problems, decide "Who does What, When." Maybe write it down.
5. Learn
   - Check the result if possible. Is the judgment sound? Does it have a reasonable chance of solving the problem?
   - What are the implications or consequences of the solution?
   - Could the problem be worked another way? Perhaps look at other people's solutions and hear what they have to say.
   - If appropriate, evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.
   - Have enough problems like this one been worked to begin to generalize to a plan for solving similar problems?
   - Does this solved problem open up new relationships that hadn't been thought of before? Think about it!
   - What are your strengths as a problem solver? Your weaknesses?
   - Are you getting involved in solving problems? Are you doing the work or is someone else? Your involvement is essential.

Interpersonal Skills For Being Effective With Individuals and In Groups

Interpersonal skills are not only important for problem solving, but for management of many areas of life. Individuals who are able to "hear their own messages" and "talk clearly with oneself"; groups whose members are able to use communication to identify and solve problems without withdrawing into passivity and silence; organizations whose members are able to bring about effective change and a high degree of productivity seem to have a common characteristic. The individuals in each instance possess a number of interpersonal skills which allow them to be effective communicators.

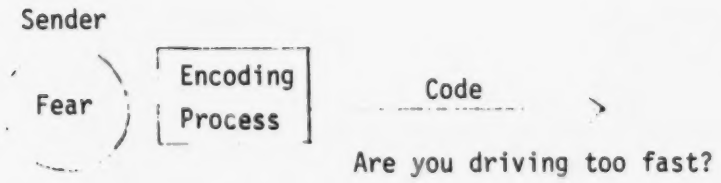
Being an effective communicator seems to be based on certain interpersonal components: 1) adequate self-concept, 2) the ability to be a good ACTIVE listener, 3) the ability to clearly send messages (effective expression), 4) the ability to identify and cope with emotions of oneself and others, particularly anger and then express these feelings constructively, and 5) the ability to share awareness of self to others truthfully and freely in order to enhance interpersonal relationships.

Possessing the interpersonal skills necessary to effectively communicate is crucial to individual and group functioning in that it enables resolution of interpersonal hostilities and conflicts, promotes creative thinking and problem solving, breaks down barriers that prevent interaction between all levels of management, and allows individuals, groups and organizations to utilize their resources effectively to attain goals. Two major components mentioned earlier

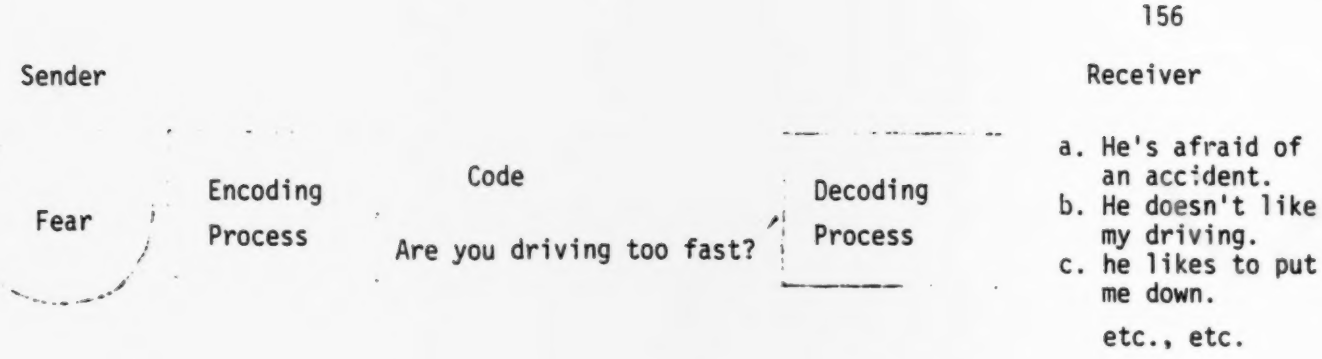
(active listening and effective sending) are the foundation of interpersonal skill attainment. These skills are the dynamic base from which the others may grow. These skills can be learned. Effective communication is not always easy and does not come about without practice. Few of us find it easy to take the risks and spend the energy to become better communicators and yet considering the importance placed on interpersonal skills, it may well be worth the try.

Interpersonal Communication

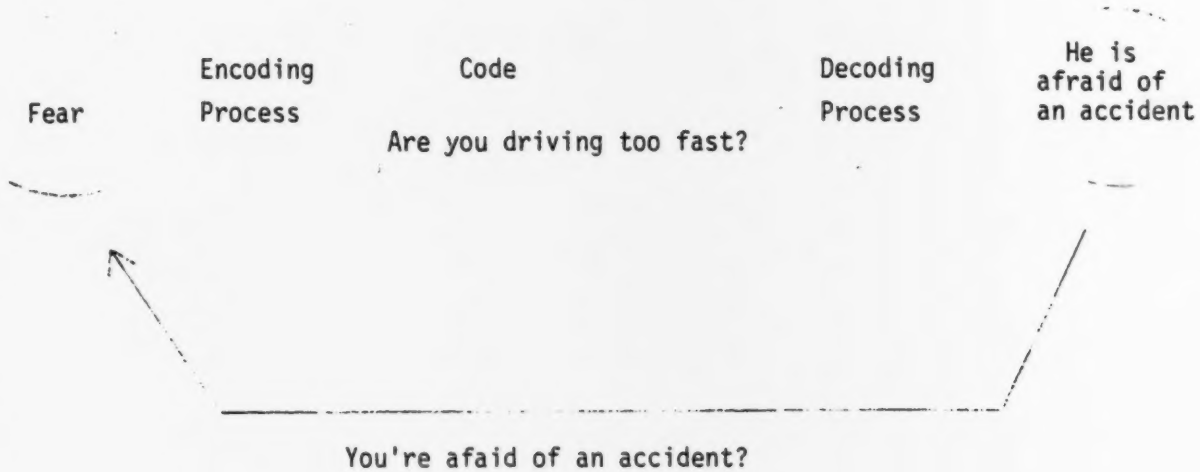
Sending and receiving messages effectively is a complicated and often frustrating experience. Consider how many times you've heard the question "Do you know what I mean?" from an individual you are engaged with in conversation. Because the sender can not transmit or directly share what is going on inside of him/her, a symbol, word or code must be chosen from and infinite array of codes to represent most closely the inner state.



Now the receiver must go through the process of decoding in order to understand what is going on inside the Sender.



Here is where the skill of active listening may pay off. The receiver can interpret a number of possible meanings attached to the Senders statement. The more closely the receiver pays attention to the Senders cues (all of them are not verbal), the closer the Receiver will probably come to the meaning the Sender intended. Since the Receiver does not know whether the message has been decoded accurately, it is important to check out the accuracy of his decoding. This is done by feeding back how he has decoded the message.



The cycle is complete. The Sender has an opportunity to clarify or refine the Receivers interpretation; both individuals have actively participated in communication.

Because no two individuals are quite the same, words and phrases used to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings may vary. What is important to look at, however, are patterns and dimensions of expression. Some patterns of response are more effective than others, some strategies for listening are qualitatively better. Let's begin with you. The Interpersonal Communication Inventory that follows is an instrument designed to sample the dimensions of self-concept, listening skills, clarity of expression, difficulties in coping with angry feelings and self-disclosure that you already possess and utilize presently. Take time to do this instrument now. It is felt that awareness of how you presently function will allow you to a) gain more meaning from the subsequent section and b) more perceptively decide which skills you would like to work on for yourself. There are no right or wrong answers so don't be afraid to be honest.

Interpersonal Communication Inventory

Millard J. Bienvenu, Sr.

This inventory offers you an opportunity to make an objective study of the degree and patterns of communication in your interpersonal relationships. It will enable you to better understand how you present and use yourself in communicating with persons in your daily contacts and activities. You will find it both interesting and helpful to make this study.

Directions

- The questions refer to persons other than your family members or relatives.
- Please answer each question as quickly as you can according to the way you feel at the moment (not the way you usually feel or felt last week).
- Please do not consult anyone while completing this inventory. You may discuss it with someone after you have completed it. Remember that the value of this form will be lost if you change any answer during or after this discussion.
- Honest answers are very necessary. Please be as frank as possible, since your answers are confidential.
- Use the following examples for practice. Put a check (X) in one of the three blanks on the right to show how the question applies to your situation.

	Yes (usually)	No (seldom)	Some-times
Is it easy for you to express your views to others?	_____	_____	_____
Do others listen to your point of view?	_____	_____	_____

- The Yes column is to be used when the questions can be answered as happening most of the time or usually. The No column is to be used when the question can be answered seldom or never. The Sometimes column should be marked when you definitely cannot answer Yes or No. Use this column as little as possible.

- Read each question carefully. If you cannot give the exact answer to a question, answer the best you can but be sure to answer each one. There are no right or wrong answers. Answer according to the way you feel at the present time. Remember, do not refer to family members in answering the questions.

	Yes (usually)	No (seldom)	Some-times
1. Do your words come out the way you would like them to in conversation?	_____	_____	_____
2. When you are asked a question that is not clear, do you ask the person to explain what he means?	_____	_____	_____
3. When you are trying to explain something, do other persons have a tendency to put words in your mouth?	_____	_____	_____
4. Do you merely assume the other person knows what you are trying to say without your explaining what you really mean?	_____	_____	_____
5. Do you ever ask the other person to tell you how he feels about the point you may be trying to make?	_____	_____	_____
6. Is it difficult for you to talk with other people?	_____	_____	_____
7. In conversation, do you talk about things which are of interest to both you and the other person?	_____	_____	_____
8. Do you find it difficult to express your ideas when they differ from those around you?	_____	_____	_____
9. In conversation, do you try to put yourself in the other person's shoes?	_____	_____	_____
10. In conversation, do you have a tendency to do more talking than the other person?	_____	_____	_____
11. Are you aware of how your tone of voice may affect others?	_____	_____	_____
12. Do you refrain from saying something that you know will only hurt others or make matters worse?	_____	_____	_____

	Yes (usually)	No (seldom)	Some-times
13. Is it difficult to accept constructive criticism from others?	_____	_____	_____
14. When someone has hurt your feelings, do you discuss this with him?	_____	_____	_____
15. Do you later apologize to someone whose feelings you may have hurt?	_____	_____	_____
16. Does it upset you a great deal when someone disagrees with you?	_____	_____	_____
17. Do you find it difficult to think clearly when you are angry with someone?	_____	_____	_____
18. Do you fail to disagree with others because you are afraid they will get angry?	_____	_____	_____
19. When a problem arises between you and another person, can you discuss it without getting angry?	_____	_____	_____
20. Are you satisfied with the way you settle your differences with others?	_____	_____	_____
21. Do you pout and sulk for a long time when someone upsets you?	_____	_____	_____
22. Do you become very uneasy when some-one pays you a compliment?	_____	_____	_____
23. Generally, are you able to trust other individuals?	_____	_____	_____
24. Do you find it difficult to compli-ment and praise others?	_____	_____	_____
25. Do you deliberately try to conceal your faults from others?	_____	_____	_____
26. Do you help others to understand you by saying how you think, feel and believe?	_____	_____	_____

	Yes (usually)	No (seldom)	Some-times
27. Is it difficult for you to confide in people?	_____	_____	_____
28. Do you have a tendency to change the subject when your feelings enter into a discussion?	_____	_____	_____
29. In conversation, do you let the other person finish talking before reacting to what he says?	_____	_____	_____
30. Do you find yourself not paying attention while in conversation with others?	_____	_____	_____
31. Do you ever try to listen for meaning when someone is talking?	_____	_____	_____
32. Do others seem to be listening when you are talking?	_____	_____	_____
33. In a discussion is it difficult for you to see things from the other person's point of view?	_____	_____	_____
34. Do you pretend you are listening to others when actually you are not?	_____	_____	_____
35. In conversation, can you tell the difference between what a person is saying and what he may be feeling?	_____	_____	_____
36. While speaking, are you aware of how others are reacting to what you are saying?	_____	_____	_____
37. Do you feel that other people wish you were a different kind of person?	_____	_____	_____
38. Do other people understand your feelings?	_____	_____	_____
39. Do others remark that you always seem to think you are right?	_____	_____	_____
40. Do you admit that you are wrong when you know that you are wrong about something?	_____	_____	_____

Total Score _____

Interpersonal Communication Inventory

Scoring Key and Norms

Instructions: Look at how you responded to each item in the ICI. In front of the item write the appropriate weight from the table on this page. For example, if you answered "Yes" to item 1, you would find below that you get three points; write the number 3 in front of item 1 in the inventory and proceed to score item 2. When you have finished scoring each of the forty items, add up you total score. You may wish to compare your score to the norms on the next page.

	Yes	No	Sometimes		Yes	No	Sometimes
1.	3	0	2	21.	0	3	1
2.	3	0	2	22.	0	3	1
3.	0	3	1	23.	3	0	2
4.	0	3	1	24.	0	3	1
5.	3	0	2	25.	0	3	1
6.	0	3	1	26.	3	0	2
7.	3	0	2	27.	0	3	1
8.	0	3	1	28.	0	3	1
9.	3	0	2	29.	3	0	2
10.	0	3	1	30.	0	3	1
11.	3	0	2	31.	3	0	2
12.	3	0	2	32.	3	0	2
13.	0	3	1	33.	0	3	1
14.	3	0	2	34.	0	3	1
15.	3	0	2	35.	3	0	2
16.	0	3	1	36.	3	0	2
17.	0	3	1	37.	0	3	1
18.	0	3	1	38.	3	0	2
19.	3	0	2	39.	0	3	1
20.	3	0	2	40.	3	0	2

Means and Standard Deviations for the ICI

Age Group	Males	Females
17-21	Mean 81.79	Mean 81.48
	S.D. 21.56	S.D. 20.06
	N. 53	N. 80
22-25	Mean 86.03	Mean 94.46
	S.D. 14.74	S.D. 11.58
	N. 38	N. 26
26 and up	Mean 90.73	Mean 86.93
	S.D. 19.50	S.D. 15.94
	N. 56	N. 45
All Age Groups by Sex	Mean 86.39	Mean 85.34
	S.D. 19.46	S.D. 18.22
	N. 147	N. 151
All Age Groups; Males and Females Combined	Mean 85.93	
	S.D. 19.05	
	N. 298	

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Reflective Questions

1. What patterns do you notice about yourself and your communication?

2. Do you have more difficulties Sending or Receiving messages?

3. What area of communication skills would you like to improve?

Skill: Sending Messages

Certain kinds of responses are not facilitative in responding to another person. This is especially true if they are upset or angry. Thomas Gordon (1974) called these responses "roadblocks." While some of these "roadblocks", at best, may be neutral if no one is upset, using them can convey lack of interest, not wanting to listen, or not understanding what the person is saying and feeling. Roadblocks can convey many negative messages: The person is not a competent problem solver, the person needs to be led, or the person just is not very bright. These messages can be damaging to a person's self-esteem and to relationships between people. The skill is to understand how roadblocks inhibit communication and to cease using them.

Roadblocks to Communication

Directive Responses

These carry a hidden message that the other person's feelings or point of view are not being considered -- that there is no interest in listening and the situation is to be disposed of in the quickest and easiest way: By telling the other person what to do.

1. Ordering, commanding, directing

   "Stop complaining about the system and concentrate on doing the best work you can."

   "Don't keep making excuses. Just get the job done."

2. Warning, threatening

"If this situation doesn't improve, I'll have to settle it for you and you won't like my solution."

"If you don't start reading the assignments, I'll give a quiz at the beginning of every class."

Solution Responses

These are attempts to solve other people's problems for them. So what's wrong with giving advice? First of all, a person who is upset most likely will not even hear the advice. Second, advice is generally given from one's own perception of the other person's needs and that might not be the same as the other person's perception. Roadblocks usually addriss other people's apparent problems rather than their real problems. By jumping in with advice, the focus of the conversation is taken away from the person with the problem. Advice is okay if requested or when the other person is no longer experiencing upset feelings.

3. Advising, offering solutions or suggestions

"Why don't you give up the weekend job and spend more time with your family?"

"All you need is more confidence in yourself. Tell yourself you can really do it."

Persuasive Responses

Persuasive responses are attempts to persuade other people to change their feelings, thoughts, or behaviors. Guilt, shame, and intimidation are sometimes the hidden persuaders. A person who is upset wants to have their feelings understood, not denied.

4. Moralizing, preaching, giving "shoulds and oughts"

   "You shouldn't feel guilty about turning someone in. You have a responsibility to the whole group."

   "If you didn't vote, you shouldn't complain about the outcome."

5. Teaching, lecturing, giving logical arguments

   "It's very unlikely that your son is in trouble. Most runaways don't go very far, and they usually come home when their money runs out."

   "If I gave you an extension, then I'd have to give other people an extension also."

6. Reassuring, sympathizing, consoling, supporting

   "Oh, it's not all that bad. Everything will look better in the morning."

   "Sure, you can do it. You always come through in a crunch."

Evaluative Responses

These responses involve a negative or a positive judgment. The other person's actions are evaluated rather than objectively observed. Evaluation can be a legitimate function of a supervisor, a teacher, or a peer in a "problem-free" situation, but it is not effective when someone is experiencing unpleasant or uncomfortable feelings or is really down.

7. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming

   "You just aren't putting any effort into your work."

"If you'd plan ahead, you wouldn't have all this to do at the last minute."

8. Name-calling, stereotyping, labelling, ridiculing

"All right, Mr. Know-It-All."

"That's the way losers talk."

9. Praising, agreeing, giving positive evaluations

"With as much common sense as you have, I'm sure you're going to handle this perfectly."

"You wouldn't intentionally do anything to hurt anyone's feelings. You're the kindest person I know."

10. Interpreting, analyzing, diagnosing

"You may think you don't want that job, but I think you really do. You're just afraid that you'll be turned down and you don't want to rush into it."

"You're just acting that way to get attention."

Avoidance Responses

These responses are designed to avoid communication about the other person's problems. They convey disinterest or unwillingness to carefully listen.

11. Withdrawing, distraction, being sarcastic, humoring, diverting

"Let's talk about something more pleasant."

"You're making a mountain out of a molehill."

"Come on, let's see a smile."

"You think you've got problems? Let me tell you about what happened to me today."

12. Emphasizing your own needs

"Just think about the position that puts me in."

"I can't do anything about that. I set that deadline three weeks ago so this wouldn't happen."

"That's all I need right now is to start getting a lot of flack from you."

Questioning Responses

Questioning is a very common response. The impulse to ask questions is so ingrained in adults that they are seldom even consciously aware of the purpose of their questions. It is important to be aware of the negative effects questions can have on someone who is experiencing a problem. A good analysis of types of questions, their purposes, and their effects appears in Wittmer and Myrick (1974), Facilitative Teaching: Theory and Practice.

13. Questioning, probing, interrogating, cross-examining

"What made you think you could get away with it?"

"Why are you getting upset?"

"Do you still put everything off until the last minute?"

Interrupting

Interrupting is a major non-listening response and a very common one.

14. Interrupting, interjecting, rushing

"But, don't you see . . ."

"Yes, but . . ."

(Nonverbally shaking head "no" while other person is talking)

Effective Message Sending

Avoiding roadblocks to communication is only part of being an effective communicator. It is equally important to communicate what you feel, need, and think in a nonthreatening manner. Typically these communications are called assertive statements.

Being assertive is somewhere between being aggressive and being passive. Aggressiveness involves trying to get one's own needs met at the expense of someone else's needs. Passivity involves meeting other people's needs at the expense of one's own needs. Assertive statements do not put the other person down and do not blame or criticize. Compare these statements.

Aggressive: You people don't know what you're doing! This is second time I've brought this coffeemaker back and it still doesn't work right. If you don't fix it I'm going to write to the president of the company.

Passive: I'm terribly sorry to bother you again, but this still isn't working right. Do you think you could look at it again?

Assertive: There's a problem with this coffeemaker. Repairing it doesn't seem to solve the problem, so I'd like a replacement . . . No, I don't have any more time to spend on bringing it in. I'd like a replacement please.

I-Messages

One kind of assertive statement is called an "I-Message". Its purpose is to maximize the probability of the other person choosing to

change the behavior that is interfering with one's needs. It consists of:

- An objective description of the behavior
- The tangible effect of the behavior on the speaker
- The speaker's feelings
- Ther preferred behavior or expectation

A substitute teacher found the following I-Message to be effective: "When there's a lot of talking in here during reading (OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION OF BEHAVIOR), it makes it difficult for me to hear students in the reading group (TANGIBLE EFFECT), and I get frustrated (FEELINGS). It would help me a lot if you would whisper or not talk at all while you work (PREFERRED BEHAVIOR).

The significance of the "I" in "I-Message" is that the upset person is "owning" the problem. When "you" creeps into the message, the other person tends to become defensive, because "You-Messages" usually come out as judgmental Roadblocks. I-Messages can enhance communication by clarifying the nature of the problem without attacking the other individuals involved.

1. To become more adept at forming I-messages, take a piece of paper and divide it up as such:

non-blameful description of the behavior	tangible effects of the behavior	feelings and emotions

2. Now list five to ten behaviors others do which typically upset you. List them here.

3. For each behavior, reconstruct it according to the chart above. For example:

   A child keeps pleading to be taken to a movie, but hasn't cleaned up his room for several days, a job he agreed upon.

non-blameful description	tangible effects	I feel like
when you don't stick to agreement to clean your room	you want me to give you a good time	you're winning and I'm losing

4. Now practice a few more I-statements.

Skill: Listening

Effective listening is an important communication skill. Effective listening is an active process in which the listener interacts with the speaker. It requires mental and verbal paraphrasing and attention to non-verbal cues like tones, gestures, and facial expressions. It is the responsibility of the listener to not only "hear" the content message being sent, but also the feelings. The skill of active listening does not stop with just "hearing" the message, but includes letting the sender know he/she is heard through verbal reflection of those feelings/ content and through utilizing non-verbal attending skills. There should be a concentrated effort to focus on the other person's thoughts and feelings and not to inject one's own agenda into the interchange. There are many increasingly skillful listening responses one can give, and each step up makes the other person feel more that they are being not only listened to but also understood.

1. Encourage the Other Person to Talk

   Silence. This first step is indeed a skill requiring practice. It requires committing oneself to focus on nothing else but the other person. It is a skill seldom practiced at social events where most people's minds are usually on what they are going to say next and where a lot of interrupting and "posturing" occurs. Communication is usually enhanced by allowing people time to collect their thoughts or perhaps to gather courage to express their thoughts and feelings.

Nonverbal Encouragement. Your body can convey that you are interested in listening. Eye contact conveys that you are being attentive. Turning to fully face the other person is a message that you are giving you full attention. If you were reading or writing, you can close your book or put down your pencil. Be aware of the physical environment. Move out from behind your desk or position yourself so that there is no physical barrier between yourself and the other person. Nodding your head at times can mean, "Yes, go on, I'm listening." A side-to-side movement can mean, "I'm sorry to hear that" or "That's too bad."

Verbal Encouragement. Very simple statements can encourage a person to talk. "I see," "un-huh," "oh,no!" "wow!" Sometimes more direct encouragement is called for, particularly if the other person is silent for a long time. "Would you like to talk about it?" "Go on," "I have some time right now if you'd like to talk some more," "Do you have time to talk about it now?" "I'd like to hear more about that." "How did you feel about that?"

2. Responding by Reflecting Meaning

When the other person "owns the problem" or is upset, encouragement to keep talking is important, but there comes a time when the listener wants to say something that is helpful.

Paraphrasing. One very effective listening response is simply to reflect back what was said. This leaves the ball with the speaker

and gives evidence that listening occurred. It also gives the other person a chance to "hear" what he or she has been saying. I would sound awkward to simply repeat or "parrot" the other person's words, so try to paraphrase so that it sounds natural.

- Other person: I can't stand the way Jones keeps pacing up and down.

  Parroting: You can't stand the way Jones keeps pacing up and down!

  Paraphrasing: Jones' pacing really bothers you!

- Other person: I just don't know how to keep those two people from monopolizing the meeting.

  Parroting: You don't know how to keep those two from monopolizing the meeting.

  Paraphrasing: Getting everyone involved is tough when those two talk all the time.

Clarifying, Confirming. Sometimes it is difficult to understand what a person is saying because some crucial information is missing. It can be helpful to ask for more information to clarify what has been said or to confirm that it has been understood.

> "If I understand you correctly, you tried to explain your actions, but she wouldn't let you. Then it was after that that you wrote the letter."
>
> "When did all this take place?"

Questions should not be probing and "why" questions should be avoided.

For example, "Why do you think he was angry at you?" might be a roadblock to communication. Roadblocks must not be used.

3. Responding by Reflecting Meaning and Feelings

The term "Active Listening" is widely used for the kind of listening which reflects not only meaning but also feelings. Listening for feelings is the key to being empathic. Almost everything a person says is preceded by and is the result of some internal thought or feeling they have. Those thoughts and feelings are encoded into verbal messages and what people say usually is not an exact translation of what they are thinking or feeling. Even a message that sounds very direct like, "You're standing on my foot," really means, "Move! Get off my foot!" Most social beings have some skill with deciding the meaning of verbal messages. It is a rare person who would take literally the question, "How many times have I told you not to slam the door?" The meaning and the feelings are clear: "I'm irritated because you slammed the door!" Through awareness and practice the skill of Active Listening can become a natural and highly facilitative communication tool. Notice how feelings, as well as meanings, are reflected in the following example of an adult educator's Active Listening skills.

STUDENT: (angrily) Well, here's my project. I hope you like it because it took a lot of work, but I only did it because it was required!

TEACHER: The project was a waste of time for you. (REFLECTING MEANING)

problem. The teacher relaxed and listened to the student's anger, reflecting back meanings and feelings. Two things happened: (1) once the angry feelings were out, the student calmed down, and (2) the real problem came out--not anger at the teacher for requiring the project, but frustration with a restrictive school system.

Active Listening serves many purposes in interpersonal communication, and it is an additional skill to be aware of one's objective when listening. Some points for awareness:

- Dealing with anger. When another person "blows up," it is particularly important for the listener not to react to the precise meaning of what was said, because the angry words most often screen the real problem. If the listener reacts defensively, the listener is focused on self-protection and is not hearing the real problem. It is more useful to encourage an angry person to keep talking than to give put-downs, to argue, or to give rebuttals. With Active Listening, angry feelings subside and are diffused. The real problem usually emerges and the screened feelings become apparent: Sadness, frustration, resentment, etc. The listener might then feel a need to deliver a self-disclosure message; for example, "I do not like to be called names," but such messages are not heard or processed as long as the other person is upset.

STUDENT: Real busy work! I have better things to do with my time!

TEACHER: You really resent the time you spent on this. (REFLECTING FEELINGS--resentment)

STUDENT: Yes! (pause) Well, it was interesting and I did learn some things. It's just that I can't do this kind of thing in my classroom. My kids would go wild at first and the principal would have a fit.

TEACHER: You wouldn't mind trying it but you're a little afraid of what might happen. (REFLECTING FEELINGS--fear or apprehension)

STUDENT: You bet! In my school, it's a real risk just to put the desks in a circle! Sometimes I wonder why I even bother to take classes and learn new ideas.

TEACHER: I guess it can be really frustrating at times. (REFLECTING FEELINGS--frustration)

In this example, the student was angry and the teacher could have "bought into" the student's problem and responded defensively with a Roadblock like, "Well, if you remember, I told the class to see me individually if anyone had problems with the assignment. You should have done that." Then the conflict could have escalated. Or, the teacher could have dismissed the student's feelings with, "Well, I'm sure it's a very good project. Sooner or later, you'll appreciate having done this." That could have ended the conversation with the student "turned off" and thinking that the teacher didn't understand and didn't care. Instead, the teacher was alert that the student had a

- Facilitating problem solving. One must not expect that Active Listening will solve other people's problems for them. Rather, it helps other people to clarify problems for themselves, to assume responsibility for their feelings and actions, and eventually to find their own solutions. Active Listening is also an invaluable skill in group problem solving for clarifying and understanding the individual needs that must be considered when searching for a successful solution strategy.

- Support and rapport. Active Listening is not just for intense or explosive situations. Feelings underlie most of the verbal and nonverbal messages people send to one another, and this is particularly true in the classroom or in the workplace where pressures and fears about learning, competence, acceptability, and control exist for both teachers and students, for both managers and workers. Good listening is contagious and skilled individuals can contribute greatly to the kind of cooperative atmosphere which enhances productivity and the quality of people's personal and occupational lives.

4. Body Language.

Not all cues for understanding come from the senders' verbalizations. Often the listener can obtain valuable insight and understanding into a sender's message by watching the body language that accompanies verbalization. For example, an individual who

lowers his eyelids to the ground as he tells you the "honest truth", generally is perceived as hiding something. A person who sits on the edge of their seat while speaking of how relaxed they are often causes the listener to challenge the credibility of that statement. Often, the body speaks louder than words. You probably already are unconsciously aware of these powerful cues and can "read" people quite will.

To test your skill at reading body language, turn your television on to any show you frequently watch. Turn the volume down so that you can't here what the characters are saying. Take a piece of paper and jot down what you feel the characters are conveying. For example:

Feeling	Gestures/Behaviors
happiness	smiling, waving hands animately

Do this for a few minutes and turn the volume up. You probably know what is going on and can pick up the essence of the plot from the dynamics of body language.

Skill: Awareness of Self and Others

Instances occur when effective listening and I-Messages do not seem sufficient to resolve what appear to be irreconcilable conflicts. This is when it becomes necessary to extend your interpersonal skills in a manner that will enhance your ability to solve the problem(s) which arise. The skills which are discussed here are necessary for ALL effective interpersonal communication, but become essential in problem-solution tasks.

A very important part of instruction in interpersonal communication is awareness of personal needs and values and also the needs and values of others. Only then will new behaviors become comfortable and natural habits of communication. The important changes are in how one views oneself and others. The verbal skills will follow with practice.

Values

Some experts believe that most values are acquired by the time a person is about ten years old. Young people are influenced by parents, peers, teachers, and "heroes." Their values reflect what they have learned about right and wrong, good and bad, from interactions with people and lessons from other parts of their environment. Morris Massey presented this point of view in The People Puzzle (1979). He explained that although significant emotional events can produce a change in values, people generally maintain those early values throughout their lives. So if one looks at a cross-section of the population, different values legitimately exist. Consider, for example, value differences

between those people who were ten years old during World War I and those who were ten years old during Watergate. Massey gave an example of a factory foreman who realized that working overtime was a penalty for his younger workers, but a reward for his older workers. In getting along with other people, it is important to accept that their values are different rather than to label them as wrong. In problem solving situations, solution strategies which conflict with people's basic values will probably not be effective. For example, people who value their health more than their financial status will not be highly motivated by higher pay to be more productive if unhealthy working conditions exist.

Needs

Most dissatisfactions with people and with situations are the result of one's needs not being met. Some basic needs are security, belongingness, love, and aesthetic fulfillment. But each person has a unique set of needs which might include, for example, a need to feel important, a need to dominate others, a need to be a follower, a need to have one's way, a need to have others in one's debt, etc. Sometimes people find it difficult to put their finger on what is bothering them about a situation. If they could identify which of their needs are not being met, they would be more likely to be able to find reasonable solutions. One very important need for most people is to feel adequate, and when their adequacy is threatened, they tend to behave irrationally. Sensitivity to one's needs and the needs of

others is an interpersonal skill of great importance.

Feelings

Awareness of one's own feelings and sensitivity to the feelings of others is absolutely necessary before knowing how to respond to another person effectively; that is, so that communication does not damage the relationship. In general, feelings fall into four categories: Mad, Glad, Sad, and Afraid. Activities exist for helping people to recognize a range of feelings within each category. A simple example of an activity is to simply list as many feelings as possible. In order of decreasing intensity, some feelings under Afraid are: Panic-stricken, terrified, frightened, threatened, alarmed, worried, anxious, bewildered, uneasy, confused, unsure. As will be explained in later sections, sensitivity to feelings is necessary both for effective listening and for being assertive.

Skill: Recognizing Problem Ownership

Good interpersonal skills are useful in most situations where two or more people interact -- at home, at work, or in social or recreational settings. They are particularly important, however, when someone is upset. It is difficult to function efficiently with feelings of sadness, frustration, helplessness, etc. If one wants to facilitate communication at such times rather than block communication, it is necessary to recognize which person is having negative or uncomfortable feelings -- oneself or the other person. The question, according to Thomas Gordon (1974) is, "Who owns the problem?" The answer to that question determines which interpersonal skills are the most useful for effective communication. When the other person is upset, listening skills are important. When you are upset, the skills to be aware of are assertive statements and self-disclosure statements. These skills are described in later sections. Here are some examples of problem ownership:

Suppose a teacher or a manager or a supervisor perceives any of the following <u>from</u> a student or a worker:

- discouraged about personal progress
- failing to meet a performance standard
- depressed about a death in the family
- not being accepted by peers
- having a conflict with peers
- not being able to compete with more talented peers

It is the student or the worker who "owns" the problem. The negative or uncomfortable feelings belong to the other person, and good listening skills are needed.

On the other hand, suppose a teacher or a manager or a supervisor is faced with any of the following from a student or a worker:

- not completing work
- borrowing something and not returning it
- being habitually late
- not following instructions
- being destructive with equipment
- concealing information
- refusing to cooperate
- ignoring important procedures

In cases like these, very likely the teacher (manager, supervisor) will feel upset and will recognize that he or she "owns" the problem. Skillful assertive statements will be useful here.

Five Step Model for Solving Problems Resulting from a Conflict of Needs

The Five-Step Model is highly adaptable to group problem solving, whether mutual problems exist for only two individuals or for a group. Some problems center around a Conflict of Needs. That is, the needs of one or more persons are not being met, and a change in the behavior of the other person or persons is necessary to solve the problem. In such situations, the specific interpersonal skills described earlier are necessary, particularly at the first step, as shown below.

1. Understand the Problem
   - ° One person initiates the process by giving an I-Message.
   - ° Often, the other person(s) will be defensive or will unveil their own related problems, so the first person must reflect meaning or actively listen in order for the real problem(s) to be identified. Avoiding roadblocks is critical at this point, particularly if the sharing becomes emotional.
2. Brainstorm for Possible Solutions
   - ° Suggestions are not to be evaluated, and a skillful person encourages others to contribute ideas.
   - ° Self-knowledge is important for resisting tendencies to interrupt, to put other people's ideas down, or not to be open to new ideas.

3. Choose a Tentative Solution

   - Although compromise is sometimes necessary at this stage, the needs of both or all people must be met as best as possible. Assertive statements are important if one feels that a solution is not good for all the people involved, particularly for oneself.
   - Active listening is useful for helping others clarify their positions about possible alternatives.

4. Carry Out the Tentative Strategy

   - It is important to decide "Who, does What, When."
   - A very specific time should be set for evaluating the solution, which should be considered a trial solution, perhaps the first of several attempts to meet everyone's needs.

5. Learn

   - As new procedures, routines, or behaviors are attempted, look for opportunities to increase self-knowledge. If the solution is not working, this is the time to look more closely at your real needs. Perhaps the problem, as you saw it, was not the real problem for you. Maybe you need to change what you are doing. Maybe the environment needs to be changed.
   - Evaluate the effectiveness of the solution. The process might need to be repeated, from steps 1 through 5.

Thomas Gordon (1974) calls this process the "No Lose" problem solving method. In most interpersonal problem solving one person "wins" and the other "loses." Examples are: Authoritarian classrooms where teachers "win" and students "lose" or permissive classrooms where students "win" and teachers "lose." Analagous situations occur in business and industry when management and labor become involved in power struggles. The objective of the Five Step Model is to resolve conflicts or to solve problems so that everyone gets some of their needs met.

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